Fortean Times

ISSUE No.29

The Journal of Strange Phenomena

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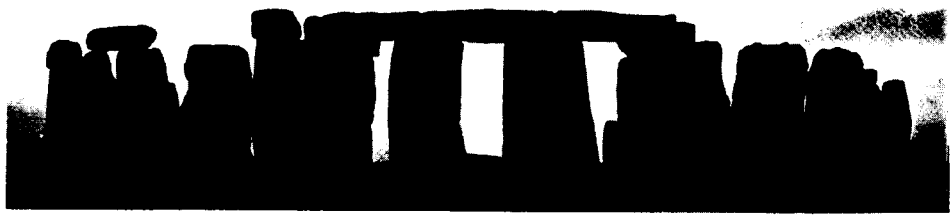

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Editorial

Fortean Times was founded 5 years ago to collect and circulate notes and studies of strange phenomena. It was named after Charles Fort (1874 – 1932) an American journalist who left us 4 of the wisest, wittiest, and most informative books that ever questioned the belief that modern man, especially in his persona as Scientist, is the omniscient crown of creation (or apotheosis of evolution, if your prefer).

To judge from the proliferation of paperbacks dealing with all aspects of the paranormal, the occult, ancient mysteries, etc., interest in Fortean subjects is running higher than ever. Yet media treatment of anomalous and non-ordinary events and their witnesses is trivial at best, contemptuous of genuine interest in accuracy and detail. FT aims to satisfy that interest, presenting an open-minded overview of the whole range of strange phonomena, with informed and informative articles and selections of recent Fortean events drawn from our worldwide news-clipping commandoes. Anyone can join in with a letter or clipping (remember to add your name and the source for the credit), if not an article or cartoon.

FT is produced by an informal – some say unholy – independent alliance of committed writers, researchers and artists. Some of them are even devoted Forteans. FT is not by or for a club, clique or movement, and is guided only by a vision of an inclusive all-encompassing science. Each issue of FT is a little miracle dependent on subscriptions, donations and voluntary labour. With your help we'll be around long enough to evolve into a fat, widely distributed, monthly news magazine. Naturally we hope that can happen as soon as possible. We want to publish FT to the highest standards of creative and professional ability, giving our contributors the fame and fortune they deserve. Profits will be ploughed back into creative projects, field and archive investigation, special commissions, and data processing. Already we have helped found the Fortean Picture Library (FPL). If you like what we're doing (even if you can't figure it out), support us. Subscribe! Spread the word! Earn good karma by sending gift subs to enemies, friends or libraries. If you like our peculiar mixture of scholarship, humour and iconoclasm, then join us...regularly.

Finally, I'd like to thank all the friends of FT who have supported us for 5 years, and who have given us the help and encouragement to begin this new adventure. For you we promise our very best – a Fortean magazine to be proud of. Excelsior!

Bob Rickard.

Charles Fort and Fortean Times

Editor Robert Rickard explains the background, philosophy and modus operandi of FORTEAN TIMES, and outlines the influence of Charles Fort, iconoclast, trickster and philosopher, who laid the groundwork for much of today's interest in the paranormal, and who is still largely unknown.

Bertrand Russell once speculated that if Mankind had come into being yesterday, created with our planet, the Universe and artificial memories, we would have no way of proving it. To many of you *Fortean Times* will likewise seem to have sprung from nowhere, complete with on-going controversies, themes, corresponding readers and a 'past'. Unlike Russell's Man, and Adam, we have a real history behind us – or think we do. In fact this issue is number 29 of a series that stretches back to 1973, when we began life as a small newsletter called *The News*. Since then we have become better known as *Fortean Times*.

Fortean Times (abbreviated to FT) developed a network of friends extending all over the world, most of whom keep us supplied with newsclippings on all that is strange in their part of the world. We collated and edited them, writing them up under general headings in whatever combination the Universe, in its inscrutable humour, made topical. Each issue was a little miracle, put together as it was on a shoe-string budget, voluntary contributions of material and labour – a veritable labour of love. Most who knew us then believed we had the makings of a larger magazine of wider appeal . . . and so here we are.

We've had to make compromises of course, to ensure our viability and future, but we can reassure our old readers that we are still fuelled by our love for our chosen field. This change is not one of attitude – which will still be informal, informed, informative, slightly sceptical and amiably good humoured in the spirit of Charles Fort (on whom more later) – but a change in scale, enabling us to do all we used to do, but better.

A PROCESSION OF THE DAMNED

Humour was a weapon Charles Fort developed into a fine art as he mounted his single-handed "onslaught upon the accumulated lunacy of fifty centuries . . . and shot the scientific basis of modern wisdom full of holes," as Ben Hecht put it. Without humour this would have been a bitter and pointless crusade, but Fort's wit makes an elegant plea for an honest spirit of inquiry to make up our own minds. He didn't like being told what to think, and in turn urged each one of us to make up our own minds.

Fort was particularly concerned by a rigid conception of science, usually among scientists themselves, which excluded many instances of genuine events and phenomena because they were too fantastical or conflicted with the orthodox view of things. These sweepings from under the carpets of science Fort called "The Damned", because in behaving like a dogmatic religion, science had effectively excommunicated them for serious consideration. They were hastily ignored, suppressed, discredited (often in shameful ways by respected scientists), or inadequately explained-away (which is a quite different thing from explaining a thing) [1]. Fort collected them and paraded them past the windows of the club of science.

What Fort had done was to spend the last 24 years of his life in the New York Public Library and the British Museum Reading Room sifting through journals and newspapers of all disciplines and countries, and the histories of the sciences, collecting notes on anything anomalous or mysterious. Most of these notes were published in his four books (see panel).

A brief selection of the diverse and arcane topics which interested him, and which still interest us, might include: the spontaneous flaming death; rains of frogs, blood, manna, ice chunks or stones from the skies; people like Kaspar Hauser who turn up from nowhere, and their mysteriously vanishing counterparts; wolf-boys and wild-men; stigmatic wounds; artifacts and human footprints found in geological strata laid down millenia before the 'evolution' of man; the evidence for 'Little People' and giants; the discoveries of America before Columbus; levitation and visions etc; 'living fossils' and the appearances of exotic animals outside their natural habitat, like the 'Surrey Puma'; sightings of the 'Tenth Planet'; coloured rains and snows; extraordinary mirage-like phenomena in the skies; strange lights; 'mass hysteria', panics and sudden deaths; bizarre coincidences; sea-serpents and other monsters; 'miracles'; and so on... [2]

Hence our eponym 'Fortean' applying to the study of strange phenomena.

Events in these and other categories are still going on today as the flow of clippings from all parts of the world testify. *Fortean Times* is continuing the work Fort began, collecting, recording and circulating contemporary reports and studies of Fortean phenomena. Join in the fun and send us a clipping of anything interesting you come across – but don't forget to add a note of the source, date and your own name (for the credit line). All clippings are gratefully received, and filed for use in our news and notes section.

SCIENCE'S FOOL [3]

After the publication of *The Book of the Damned* in 1919, American newspapers, whenever they printed some out-of-the-ordinary item, would say: "Here is another datum for

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'I am a collector of notes upon subjects that have diversity, such as deviations from concentricity in the lunar crater Copernicus and a sudden appearance of purple Englishmen...But my liveliest interest is not so much in things, as in the relations of things. I have spent much time thinking about the alleged pseudo-relations that are called coincidences.What if some of them should not be coincidences?' Charles Fort *Wild Talents.*

that arch-enemy of science, Charles Fort." This was not quite true. Fort had no bone to pick with science – in fact he insisted on proper rules of evidence – it was only the slavish subservience to dogma in science, malpractise in institutionalized science and the arbitrary pronouncements of dilettante scientists who came in for his stick. Fort's whackings were never malicious, perhaps more in the detached spirit of the Zen master who beats a dozing meditator.

Fort argued that a major flaw in scientific philosophy lay in its exclusiveness. The scientific method lay in ever narrower attempts to define and divide things and to isolate them into units or categories. A scientific experiment, he wrote, is an attempt to define something by excluding the rest of the universe – a patent impossibility. The root problem was one of semantics and language – definitions, categories, measurements and meanings of words can only ever be *local* expressions, imperfect approximations to unknowable absolutes [4]. The language problem is further complicated by the inadequacy of our concepts of how to question the Universe or to interpret its answers, for as modern quantum mechanics has demonstrated,the 'answer' may be telling us more about the 'question' than the thing we were trying to query. Heisenberg wrote: "What we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning." [5] Or as the Duck said, in *Alice in Wonderland:* "When I find a thing it's usually a frog or a worm."

Scientists, often out of mental laziness, regard their 'laws' as absolute terms; whereas if they were rigorous they would agree with Karl Popper's conclusion that "every scientific statement must remain tentative forever. It may indeed be corroborated, but every corroboration is relative to other statements which, again, are tentative."[6] Whilst we are immersed in a world of ambiguous perceptions and hindered by the paradoxes of language we can only approximate to absolutes, which to our present form are ultimately unknowable. "If we could apply the word absolute to anything, say to a frog," Fort wrote to a friend, "that Frog would be God."[7]

I am not a believer in deliberate conspiracies to suppress knowledge, but I do accept that a great fear and loathing arises in the breast of the Establishment when it is confronted by the 'outlaw' – the Damned facts. The body of science behaves like any other organism that is threatened or invaded and closes ranks against the symbol of change and chaos [8]. Although the nature of science itself has changed since Fort's day, it is still practised by fallible humans, with their tendencies to fear change, to crave to be right or 'first' and their reluctance to risk their status, credibility and their job. It might be understandable but it doesn't make good science, and unfortunately such lowmindedness is fostered by an Establishment science subject more to the perfidious and arbitrary dictates of politics and economics than to the true spirit of free inquiry.

UNDERLYING ONENESS

What then is the alternative? Angrily, some scientists suggested the only alternatives would be to pointlessly check their 'constants' every day, or to abandon themselves to a Universe of chaos and insanity. This is the failure of the imagination of a rigid viewpoint. Chaos, being only the apparent indetectability of meaning or pattern,only shows up our inability to ask the right questions, and does not imply the Universe is a random meaningless existence. Fort was not a religious man but saw no harm in referring to the totality of things as 'God'. By the conventions of science alone this God would be an idiot " . . . drooling comets and gibbering earthquakes . . . " But Fort suggested a more inclusive approach, and out of his thousands of notes came a radical vision, bridging science and mysticism; that the Universe functioned, not like Newton's great machine, but like a single organism. He often likened it to a body – "The whole is God to its parts" – with its specialized cells, automatic reflexes, metabolic processes, growth and decay, reactions and drives, most of which would be incomprehensible to individual components,assuming they could think, and yet which function nevertheless in a coherent existence. An inclusive science would relate, not to hypothetical absolutes, but to the transience of phenomena.

Fort suggested a state of existence he called 'Continuity' in which all forms of phenomena and things were merely different expressions of the same fundamental organic existence, like islands in a sea, seemingly separate but connected in the bedrock of existence below the surface of appearances. All things are inter-related, indistinguishable at their merging points, "of an underlying oneness."[9] This radical view of phenomena came at a turning point in the history of physics, when Heisenberg was formulating his Uncertainty Principle, since when the pronouncements of physicists have often become interchangeable with those of mystics [4]. As we work out the implications of this, we are drawn towards new definitions of 'reality', new understandings of perception and meaning, and the patterns of simultaneous and cyclic phenomena [10]. Examples of coincidental phenomena include meteorites or aerial light displays during quakes; celestial periodicities in animal behaviour, plant growth or natural catastrophies; accident series, and sudden inexplicable waves of deaths or illnesses; events which mimic similar events in fiction; the phenomena of twins; the simultaneous filing of patents on the same thing by unconnected people; the relationship between appearances of monsters (like the Cornish sea-serpent 'Morgawr', the Sasquatch or Bigfoot) and UFOs, etcetera. Fort himself would have been amused to learn that at the same time he was writing about Continuity, the hapless Paul Kammerer was thinking about a related concept of meaningful coincidences he called 'Seriality' – and both prefigured the Jung-Pauli thesis of 'Synchronicity', which Jung described as an "acausal connecting principle" [11].

'Every science is a mutilated octopus. If its tentacles were not clipped to stumps, it would feel its way into disturbing contacts.' Charles Fort *Lo!*

'Why don't they see, when sometimes magnificently there is something to see? The answer is the same as the answer to another question. Why, sometimes, do they see when there is nothing to see?' Charles Fort *Lo!*

TELEPORTATION AND UFOs

Sometime before 1920 Fort coined the word 'teleportation' to describe the instantaneous transport of people, animals and objects through space, solid matter and even time. In the course of his four books he developed the idea into a central hypothesis of the Continuous Universe – a primal shaping force of nature which survives now only weakly and sporadically as an atavism – a once powerful distributing mechanism which would show up in the appearances and disappearances of people, of alien animals roaming the countryside, of stones appearing at and falling from a point in mid-air in a closed room, or of fishes snatched away from their ponds to fall from a far distant sky or to fertilize a new planet somewhere [12]. The notion that such a force could sometimes come under the control of humans, whether spontaneously, unconsciously or deliberately, was quickly taken up by John W Campbell, editor of the science-fiction magazine *Astounding*, who during the 1950s encouraged his stable of writers (many now famous names like Bester, Harness, Sturgeon, Heinlein, etc) to use Fort's material – and from there many of Fort's ideas, like teleportation and controlled psychokinesis (the manipulation of matter by mental effort only) passed into popular usage.

We also acknowledge Fort as one of the main influences and origins of today's interest in UFOs, life on other worlds and, indeed, other forms of life [13]. Long before the von Danikens of today he speculated about whether this earth had been visited in earlier times by voyagers from distant worlds in space – perhaps we were being developed as livestock, or were sitting tenants in some cosmic rent-war? He sincerely believed that one day space travel would be possible and visualized new wagon-trains of colonists trailing out into the vacuous prairie. Thirty years before Kenneth Arnold's classic sighting of "flying saucers" in 1947, Fort was collecting notes on strange lights seen floating, dancing or speeding through our skies – things that might be crafts from other worlds, unknown forms of natural phenomena (like ball-lightning), or even a strange luminous form of life. He discovered that such sightings often came in clusters or waves (called 'flaps'), as they did in 1896/7 and 1904/5 when "mystery airships" with powerful searchlights sped at speeds impossible for the time through the skies of Britain and the United States [14]. Fort even anticipated the paraphysical and parapsychological dimensions of close encounter cases when he suspected of apparitional phenomena: "that many appearances upon this earth . . . were beings and objects that visited this earth, not from a spiritual existance, but from outer space." [15]

FASHIONS OF BELIEF

When *Book of the Damned* was published very few knew what to make of it since it presented a radical criticism of contemporary science, yet it was written in a difficult, unique and romantic prose-style. Fort himself joked that perhaps he was the forerunner of a new kind of literature in which the heroes and villains were droughts and comets, swarms and storms, volcanoes and plagues, and the backdrop for their adventures would be the sciences. His vision of a swirling tumultuous busy Universe constrasted with the formal ordered and sterile existance touted by orthodox science and inculcated in all of us at school . . . the world of the laboratory and the madhouse of life. Many readers will find Fort's writing difficult, but the insights are well worth the effort. He wrote with an eminently quotable wit, by turns poetic, violent and profound, but always with a sagacious humility, a gentle mocking at his own follies as well as those of so-called experts. He also has a sense of humour hard to match in any other philosopher of science. Considering his contributions to our understanding of the processes and phenomena of our erratic existence it is remarkable that he is still largely unknown, rarely acknowledged, and often misunderstood even by some who professed to love him [16].

If I seem to be eulogizing Fort there are good reasons, not the least that he opened up the interest in all of the subjects mentioned for myself and countless others. *Fortean Times* does not owe any special allegiance to Fort – this is as he would wish it – yet his work and his aims will serve as a model to our own efforts within these pages. He was above all a connoisseur of explanations. A favourite technique was to offer 'explanations' which were based on the same data but as absurd as the conventional explanations, sometimes more absurd and sometimes less. For example he would counter the 'whirlwind' theory of showers of fishes by emphasizing the anomalies of the data [17] and offering a vast, invisible "super-Sargasso sea" floating overhead from which things shake loose and fall. He never believed his own explanations and gently chides the reader if he takes them seriously. That seems pointless to some, but the humour is very instructive. Fort asks us to substitute acceptance for belief, if we are to get anywhere in our attempts to understand.

Explanations are subject to the whims of fashion – e.g., apparition phenomena, once the preserve of theologians and demonologists, is now the subject matter of psychic research. Fort wrote: "I conceive of nothing in religion, science or philosophy that is more than the proper thing to wear for a while . . ." The boundaries of science – even orthodox science – are changing all the time as the magic of yesterday becomes the technology of today. Voltaire scorned the notion of fossils; Lavoisier told the Academy of Sciences in 1769 that only peasants would believe stones could fall from the sky, because "there *are* no stones in the sky!", thus delaying the acceptance of meteorites until 1803; spaceflight was once considered "Utter bosh!" [18]. Today we see the big boys moving in on paraphysics and parapsychology; old herbals are plundered for new pharmaceuticals, and the practices of witchdoctors for new therapeutics; computer-time is lavished

'Science has done its utmost to prevent whatever Science has done.' Charles Fort *Wild Talents.*

'When I come upon the unconventional repeating, in times and places far apart, I feel – even though I have no absolute standards to judge by – that I am outside the field of the ordinary liar.' Charles Fort *Wild Talents.*

on astrology, ley hunting and UFOs; and biofeedback machines bring diverse states of mind within ordinary reach. The task of *Fortean Times* will be to keep a track of and explore these shifting frontiers.

LAUGHTER AND IGNORANCE

As Forteans we don't wish to turn Fort into a cult-figure, but out of convenience and not a little respect use his name for our particular approach to the limitations of knowledge and the subject matter of strange phenomena, the non-ordinary, and discussions about the nature of phenomenal reality, plus a tip of the hat to all the other jovial proto-Forts in history [19]. Concerning a proposal put to him to form a 'Fortean society', Fort replied: "The great trouble is that the majority of persons who are attracted are the ones we do not want . . . persons who are revolting against Science, not in the least because they are affronted by the myth-stuff of the sciences, but because scientists oppose or do not encourage them." [20] When Tiffany Thayer went ahead and organised a *Fortean Society* in 1931, Fort thought it was a dangerous step and likely to turn his advocation of free inquiry into a formal opposition to the scientific Establishment, thus becoming equally dogmatic itself. He refused to join it.

Independence of thought, open-minded inquiry, curiosity and balance-restoring sense of humour, then, are the basic qualities of a Fortean, and the attitudes to which *Fortean Times* will subscribe. Back in 1973 we were founded for the serious purpose of recording all the reported incidents of strange phenomena that are still going on. After Fort's death Thayer's *Fortean Society* continued the work of collecting and publishing notes and data on strange phenomena, but sporadically, petering out in the 1950s. In 1966 two Fortean societies were formed: the *International Fortean Organization* (INFO) by Ron and Paul Willis [21]; and the *Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained* (SITU) by the zoologist-author Ivan T Sanderson [22]. Both of these groups published journals for the discussion of Fortean phenomena, but their space for clippings on current phenomena was always limited. In 1973 we (or *The News* as we were known then) began to collect, record and circulate the reportage of contemporary phenomena, especially from Britain, which was being missed by the US journals. In 1976 we changed our name to *Fortean Times* and became probably the largest clearinghouse for Fortean clippings. We hope our contributors will continue to send in clippings since this is not only a prime source of information but essential to building up a proper archive of data.

Unlike most other commercial journals we are neither "just a magazine" nor in it solely for the sake of publishing. All of us associated with *Fortean Times* have a keen interest in Fortean subjects and studies and an involvement in free-lance research. We have certain aims in common and hope the success of FT will allow us to achieve them and to serve you better. We have already established the *Fortean Picture Library* (FPL. Further information on request.) as the visual archive of our field. Further goals include a special publications programme of in-depth studies or rare and out-of-print reference material; a computer data-base of Fortean material; and a formal structure for funding research and field investigation. Further developments of FT reader services might include adding more pages to FT, publishing more frequently (e.g., bi-monthly), and a mail-order book service.

From our world wide network of readers and friends we receive a steady stream of news clippings, which are promptly sorted into rough general categories. Examples of these categories or Fortean topics are given elsewhere

Our practice until now has been to let the clippings accumulate until we have a sufficient quantity to make up an interesting selection, which is written-up for the FT data pages. If we are fortunate enough to publish more frequently we'll adopt the slightly different technique of using more categories in each issue but using only the most recent stories. Once the clipping has been used, it is filed in the main archive for posterity. This all sounds more orderly than it is in real (?) life, and in time we shall have to tackle properly the problems of data storage, retrieval and processing with the use of microfiche and micro-computer systems. Nor does any of this convey the general sense of hilarity and absurdity rampant at an FT clipping sort, and which we hope carries over into FT as gleeful wonder.

Our experience in Fortean publishing has shown us the problems of data gathering. In a so-called civilised community the ancient value of omens, portents, signs and wonders, curiosities and mysteries is neglected or derided. Once these phenomena were considered of central importance in man's relationship with the rest of the Universe – today they are often reduced to mere fillers by blase or busy editors. The nature of our data-gathering network prevents us from being bang-up-to-date, but we try, and will keep on trying. The data itself is of perennial interest and often it is more informative to keep a solitary clipping back until several similar cases accumulate – a technique we frequently employ to effect.

Nor do we ask you to be credulous. Our news and notes should be regarded more as clues than as the unquestionable truth. They are stimuli to your curiosity-buds – starting points for closer investigation – and should be tested by your own criteria before you accept them. Don't rely on the statements of so-called experts – there are no experts in the Unknown – not even ourselves! Fort said of himself, and we apply it to ourselves too, that our interpretations of the data are of little consequence ". . . but the data will be for anybody to form his opinions on . . . I shall find out for myself, and anyone who cares to find out with me." We extend the

'Horses erect in a blizzard of frogs, and the patter of worms on umberellas. The hum of ladybirds in England - the twang of a swarm of Americans at Templemore, Ireland. The appearance of Cagliostro – the appearance of Prof. Einstein's theories. A policeman dumps a wildman into a sack, and there is alarm upon all the continents of this earth because of a blaze in (the constellation of Orion)...All are related, because all are phenomena of one organic existence.' Charles Fort *Lo!*

invitation to you, but hang on . . . for as one reviewer of Fort wrote back in 1919, it'll be like riding the tail of a comet!

Bob Rickard

NOTES

1 For a guide to rationalizing and dismissive explanations see 'Damnation!', an article by Bob Skinner, in *Fortean Times* 27, pp15-18.

2 For a guide to the varieties and complexities of Fortean phenomena, and their historical continuity, see *Phenomena* by John Michell & RJM Rickard (Thames & Hudson, 1977; Pantheon, USA, 1978).

3 "The Fool does not lead a revolt against the Law; he lures us into a region of the spirit, where, as Lamb would put it, the writ does not run." Enid Elsford *The Fool: His social and literary history* (Faber, 1935).

4 The semantic problem is one of the main limitations on all inquiry, not just the scientific. Fritjof Capra (*The Tao of Physics,* Wildwood House, 1975) suggests that it is a consequence of the Cartesian Division (i.e., the separation of the world into religion and science, mind and matter, observer and observed, favoured by Descartes). This paradigm was not superseded until the advent of high-energy physics — its omen being a whopping paradox: that matter-energy manifested as a particle and a wave simultaneously, and that the very act of measuring a sub-atomic particle turns it into yet another equation . . . and physics merges with metaphysics.

5 Werner Heisenberg *Physics and Philosophy* (Allen & Unwin, 1963).

6 Fort delighted in discovering tautologies in scientific dogma. In a passage about a fall of red worms in Sweden in 1924, he wrote: If there is no change in the direction of a moving body, the direction of a moving body is not changed.' 'But,' continued he, 'if something can be changed, it is changed as much as it is changed.' So red worms fell from the sky in Sweden, because from the sky, in Sweden, red worms fell. How do geologists determine the age of rocks? By the fossils in them. And how do they determine the age of fossils? By the rocks they're in." *LO!,* chapter 1 (*Books* p547f).

7 Letter to Edmund Hamilton, 25 October 1926. Quoted in Knight (see panel) p173.

8 For the most authoritative study of the resistance of orthodoxy to the new in the history of science, see Thomas S Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicaco Universiry Press, 2nd edn, 1970).

9 In discussing Fort in his *Feds and Fallacies in the Name of Science,* Martin Gardner sums up Fort's "doctrine of the hyphen" (in which everything is in an intermediate state between extremes) thus: "Because everything is continuous with everything else, it is impossible to draw a line between truth and fiction. If science tries to accept red things and exclude yellow, then where will it put orange? Similarly, nothing is 'included' by science which does not contain error, nor is there anything 'damned' by science which does not contain some truth." (Dover Books, 1957, p48).

10 *Fortean Times* will be presenting articles on these and other topics in future issues.

11 A broad discussion of these hypotheses will be found in Arthur Koestler's *The Roots of Coincidence* (Hutchinson, 1972; Picador, 1974).

12 This force may now be vestigial. "The crash of falling islands — the humps of piling continents — and then the cosmic humour of it all . . . that the force that once heaped the peaks of the Rocky Mountains now slings pebbles at a couple of farmers near Trenton, NJ." *LO!* chapter 4 (*Books* p571).

13 Fort expressed a number of doubts about Darwinism, and offered several alternatives. One concerned his suggestion that people from other planets might be teleporting here (*LO!* chapter 4, *Books* p573f). In *Wild Talents* chapter 18, he elaborates: "I now have a theory that, of themselves, men never did evolve from lower animals; but that in early and plastic times, a human being from somewhere else appeared upon this earth, and that many kinds of animals took him for a model, and rudely and grotesquely imitated his appearance, so that today, though the gorillas . . . are only caricatures, some of the rest of us are somewhat passable imitations . . ." (*Books* p966).

14 Loren E Gross has written two scholarly and privately printed studies: *The UFO Wave of 1896* (1974); and *Charles Fort, The Fortean Society & UFOs* (1976) which detail sightings from 1895 to 1947 of "mystery airships" and aerial lights.

15 *New Lands* chapter 18 (*Books* p419f). Further and up-to-date discussion of the paranormal aspects of ufology can be found in John Keel's *UFOs: Operation Trojan Horse* (Abacus, 1973); Jacques Vallee's *Passport to Magonia* (Spearmen, 1970) and *UFOs: The Psychic Solution* (Panther, 1977); and *The Unidentified* (Warner, 1975), and *Creatures of the Outer Edge* (Warner/NEL, 1978) both by Jerome Clark and Loren Coleman.

16 Tiffany Thayer, in his introduction to the 1941 edition of *The Complete Books,* and the late Ivan Sanderson in his own writings, at times seem quite unable to grasp the nature of Fort's detachment from the data and his method of arguing. Thayer even went so far as to urge readers to skip Fort's opening chapters in *Book of the Damned,* on the grounds that they are not as lively as the writing that follows them. These chapters contain the condensed essence of Fort's thesis, of which the entire remainder of this work is an illustrated elaboration.

17 Fort noted from many hundreds of authentic records of falling objects and materials that some kind of selection seemed to be involved — e.g., if seeds, or frogs fell they would all be of same species, age, rough size (with very few exceptions). If the contents of a pond (or whatever) had been sucked up by a whirlwind (the standard dismissive explanation) we should expect all kinds of debris, segregated by weight perhaps, to come down with the fall, but there is none. In the case of frogs Fort never found a single mention of tadpoles or old frogs — always adolescents. Many falls are confined to small areas or are repeated in the same place over intervals, or, in the case of a toadfall at Chalon-sur-Saone, France in 1922 (*Books* p546), lasting several days — characteristics which would rule out whirlwinds certainly. Finally it is worth mentioning the equally dubious explanation for chunks of ice falling from the sky: that they fall from planes. If a modern refutation ('The Ice-fall Problem' by JE McDonald, *Weatherwise,* 1960) is not convincing, consider the many authentic incidents from *before* the advent of powered flight!

18 For further discussion of what Arthur C Clarke called "the failure of imagination", see his *Profiles of the Future* (Pan, 1962).

19 The list of these proto-Forts would be long indeed. We'd inlcude a number of Indian, Chinese and Japanese Buddhist philosophers; some Taoists; the compilers of early natural histories; some travellers (like Giraldus Cambrensis); skeptical philosophers and neoPlatonists; some of the pioneering 'scientists' (like Kirscher, Cardan, Olaus Magnus, Lycosthenes); diaryists (like John Aubrey); collectors of curiosa (like Pu Sung-ling); etc.

20 Letter to Edmund Hamilton, 27 May 1926. Quoted in Knight (see panel) p172.

21 INFO: 7317 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20740, USA. Write for details.

22 SITU: Membership Services, RFD 5, Gales Ferry, CT 06335, USA. Write for details.

Bibliography/Biography

Fortean Picture Library

CHARLES HOY FORT

THE BOOK OF THE DAMNED
1919, Boni & Liveright, NY.
1972, Ace (pb), NY.
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LO!
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1932, Claude Kendall, NY.
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1941, Holt Rinehart & Wilson, NY, for the Fortean Society. Brief index. Contains *Book of the Damned, New Lands, LO!,* and *Wild Talents.*

THE COMPLETE BOOKS OF CHARLES FORT
1974, Dover Books, Ny. Basically a reprint of the 1941 edition, with the same index, and a new introduction.

Recommended reading for introductory discussions of Fort and Fortean phenomena.

PHENOMENA by John Michell & RJM Rickard (Thames & Hudson, pb, 1977; Pantheon, NY, pb, 1978).

CHARLES FORT: PROPHET OF THE UNEXPLAINED, a biography by Damon Knight (V Gollancz, London/ Doubleday, NY, 1970).

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CHARLES HOY FORT
Brief biography.

Biographical notes compiled from Damon Knight's biography (see panel).

1874 – born at Albany, New York, 9th August.
1892 – Aged 18; left home to escape tyrannical father; worked on a NY paper.
1893 – Aged 19; made editor of a local Queens paper; quit to hitch-hike around the world, Southern States, Scotland, Wales, London, Capetown.
1896 – Aged 22; contracted malaria leaving South Africa; back to NY; nursed by Anna; married her.
1897 – Aged 23; lived in Bronx; dire poverty; journalism and small jobs; broke chairs for firewood; wrote 10 novels; collected 25,000 notes, but burned them because "they were not what I wanted."
1906 – Aged 32; virtually a hermit between home and library; began voracious reading of scientific journals and papers taking notes.
1915 – Aged 41; began writing *X* and *Y,* and begins *BOTD.*
1919 – Aged 45; Dreiser gets Boni & Liveright to publish *BOTD.*
1920 – Aged 46; in depression burns 40,000 notes; he and Anna stay in London for 6 months, then back to NY.
1921 – Aged 47; December, back in London for 8 years; works at British Museum; writes *New Lands;* speaks at Speaker's Corner for amusement; begins again note collecting.
1929 – Aged 55; back in Bronx; working on *LO!*
1931 – Thayer and Sussman form the *Fortean Society* which peters out with Thayer's death in 1959.
1932 – Aged 58; after completing *Wild Talents* Fort dies of unspecified weakness in Royal Hospital, NY, on 3 May; leaves 60,000 notes, now in NY Public Library. •

Among the more mystifying of mystical phenomena are the instances where the celebrated corpse refuses to decay normally, if at all.

Some of you might recoil from this subject feeling it typical of Medieval superstition and hardly creditable in the 20th century – but it happens, as we shall see. Although most of the known instances are from the hagiographies of the Catholic Church, cases of incorruption have been recorded from other countries and religious backgrounds. We have a note of a recent case involving the well-known yogi and teacher, Paramahansa Yogananda, who had settled in Los Angeles forming the Self Realization Fellowship. Part of his teaching was that an advanced yogi could put himself into a state of suspended animation in which all the vital functions were as undetectable as in death, or control his own aging process to live for centuries. However, he predicted his own death for 7 March 1952, and said that his body would show a sign that he was a true yogi. Though he seemed in perfect health he died of what appeared to be a heart attack on the appointed day, and according to his instructions his body remained on view in a glass-topped coffin for 20 days. It was not embalmed or treated in any way and was still undecayed at the time of burial and said to be exuding a mysterious fragrance (another detail familiar from many Catholic cases). Harry T Rowen, of the Forest Lawn Memorial Park, in Glendale, California, confirmed the "perfect preservation" of Yogananda's body in a notorized statement, adding that it was "so far as we know from mortuary annals, an unparalleled one." Grit 2 July 1972.

Typical of many cases is that of Nadja Mattei, who died in Rome, aged 2 yrs, in 1965. Her mother claims that for 12 years her daughter's voice would come to her in dreams asking to be fetched from her coffin. Early in 1977 the coffin was opened at last and they found the quite uncorrupted body of baby Nadja. *News of the World* 8 May 1977.

If any of you investigate the subject further – a good place to start is the excellent listing and bibliography of *The Incorruptibles* by Joan Carroll Cruz (Tan Books: Box 424, Rockford, IL 61105, USA; 1977) – you will find that a significant proportion of cases seem to involve discovery through dreams and visions. A disturbing case happened last year, which for once did not turn out as expected. Huge crowds gathered in a German cemetary on 26 February 1978, to witness the exhumation of Anneliese Michel after a nun had told the girl's parents that Anneliese had appeared to her 3 times in dreams saying: "Let my coffin be opened for all to see. They will find my body untouched by mortal decay, as you see me now, with the nail wounds of Christ on my hands and feet." The local authorities yielded to pressure from the parents and the Church to allow the exhumation, and many thousands stormed the cemetary near Klingenberg in the hope of witnessing a double miracle – incorruption and stigmatization of a corpse. *NOW* reporter George Edwards gives an account of the scene, as police tried to control the crowds, who were scaling walls and festooned on gravestones and monuments for better views. As the earth-covered coffin was taken into a mortuary to open a rumour swept wildly through the expectant crowd. Edwards heard a shout: "It's a miracle! She looks as if she's alive!"... but all present in the mortuary, including a Bavarian State prosecutor and the Mayor of Klingenberg, declared "Her body was in an advanced state of decomposition, just as would be expected after all the time she had spent in the grave." *Rand Daily Mail* (South Africa) 27 February 1978; *News of the World* 12 March 1978. The crowd dispersed disappointed and feeling "they had been cheated" – there is no mention of a nun being tarred and feathered...

Anneliese died in 1976, aged 23, after a protracted exorcism ordered by the Bishop of Wurzburg, after her family, fiance and local priests believed she became possessed by at least six demons, one claiming to be Hitler. In a saga that shocked Germany the fiasco at the cemetary was followed by the trial of the exorcists themselves for criminal neglect, since they had starved the girl – she weighed less than five stone at her death – as part of their treatment. Doctors alleged the girl need not have died if both parents and priests had been more caring and less fanatical and the inquiry that was to

The incorrupt body of St Bernadette Soubirous, who died in 1879, exhumed in 1909 and 1919 (from Cruz).

follow arose out of a doctor refusing to sign the death certificate. We will return to this fascinating ease in a future section on recent possession cases.

In Espartinas, near Seville, Spain, a family grave was opened in mid-1977, to inter the body of a local man. The cemetary keeper was shocked to find that the body of the man's son was still intact after 40 years. Jose Garcia Moreno had died of meningitis in 1937, aged 11, and his brothers deny that he was embalmed. The whole village, who all saw for themselves that night the preserved body in its rotting grave-clothes, believe the boy must have been a saint, and have begun agitating for his case to be sent to Rome for the long process of canonization. *Reveille* 30 September 1977.

It is traditional to think of such phenomena in the context of religion, and often, to the Church's chagrin, apart from any consideration of piety which is usually awarded in retrospect as in the case of the boy Moreno (above). In *The Brothers Karamazov* Dostoievsky has a scene of grim humour in which the corpse of a holy ascetic shows unmistakable signs of mortal dissolution, much to the disgust of other characters who take it as a sign the recluse was a hypocrite. The Church's attitude is simple and stern — 'miraculous' phenomena are not automatically indicative of God's favour since (in their terms) they can be imitated by the Devil. The Church prefers to canonize on the basis of a holy and heroic life, keeping 'miracles' as secondary evidence. In this view, strictly, any 'miraculous' phenomena not associated with piety and humility are labelled 'diabolical', which damns at a swipe all similar occurrences outside the religious context.

We recently learned of a case with minimal religious colouring, from *New Thrill* (Malaysia) 6 December 1978. Unfortunately *New Thrill* is not one of the world's most reliable sources and any reader who knows of good references to this story is invited to tell us. A beautiful Hungarian countess, Zofia Bosniakova, died in 1644, aged 35, having been married twice and bearing one son. Her first husband died within a year of her marriage at 17; and the brawling promiscuous ways of her second husband — Franco Wesselenyi, a swordsman, diplomat and governor of Hungary — caused her to withdraw into a lonely, simple and pious life in Strecno Castle, northern Slovakia. During renovations at the castle in 1689 (45 years after her death) her coffin was opened to reveal her flawless beauty. Our source says that 'The Lady of Strecno', as she is known to villagers who believe she is a saint (though not canonized), lies in state today, in a church at Teplic in Czechoslovakia, dressed in a robe she herself embroidered, and still looking beautiful.

As a postscript we might as well record here a case mentioned in *Grit* 2 July 1972, which is unrecorded by Cruz, or by Father Herbert Thurston (*The Physical Phenomena of Mysticism*, 1952). In the church of Our Lady of Merov, in Madrid, Spain, lies the fresh-looking body of Sister Mariana Novarro Romero who died in 1625. She is dressed in a nun's habit, and her smiling face and exposed hands and feet show no sign of decay after nearly three and half centuries.

Credit: Chris J Holtzhausen, Peter Hope-Evans, Colin Mather, Joe Swatek, Ion Will. RJMR.

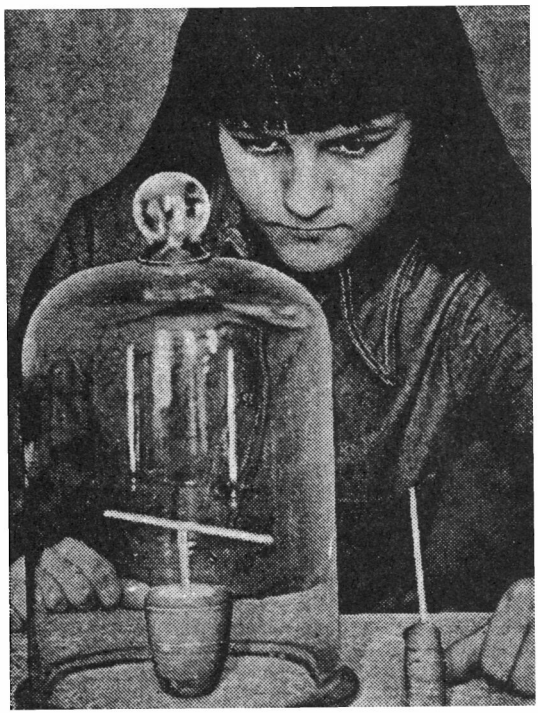
Uri Geller's metal bending feats have been well publicised and the debate about his honesty drags on, with many of the so-called rational 'explanations' as wild and far-fetched as the supposed talents. Looking through our files we see these talents are widespread — some out of control, some volitional...

ELECTRIC PEOPLE

Back in 1928, Wilfred Batt, 18, a farmer's son from near Ashford in Kent, was plagued by weird warpings and whirlings shortly after a wireless set was installed in his home. Iron bars which he held suddenly bent almost double. One bar was attracted so violently to the earth that it pulled him flat on the ground. Going up to bed, he saw a candlestick jumping downstairs to meet him and then follow him about. A silver tray leapt at him; a dining room gong began to sound loudly. His wrist watch stopped. All kinds of things would become excited by his presence: lumps of coal and wood, furniture, ornaments, matress springs, would all jump about his vicinity. Once a heavy crowbar, which the boy could scarcely lift, shot from his hands and drove through the galvanised iron roof of the coal shed. *Weekly Dispatch* 5 Feb 1928.

In the late 1950s, a girl called Andrea Kolintz (possibly a pseudonym), from upstate New York, found she had a very disturbing influence on her environment, had accidents, objects would fly about and doors open and slam. In an interview, in Illinois about 1976, she said: "I don't eat in restaurants any more because of the embarrassments. I've suffered with cutlery bending all around me, and waitresses having accidents and dropping things. I've had mattresses burst in hotel rooms for no apparent reason, and bottles inexplicably start falling from shelves in shops. Our neighbours were startled once by an unexpected fall of monster hailstones ...after I'd returned home tense from a tiff with a boy." Once upon a time people were burnt as witches for this sort of thing; today they tend to be seen as heroic throwbacks or else forerunners of coming evolutionary developments. Author Stephen King claims he based his best-seller *Carrie* on this girl. She links the onset of her powers to head injuries received during World War II. "They began during the months I spent recovering in hospital. I was very angry and upset and as I walked towards a cupboard, a pitcher suddenly moved towards the edge of a shelf and smashed to pieces." *Reveille* 25 Feb 1977.

"As Kant observed, it is just as inconceivable that I should move my arm as that I should be able to move the moon in its orbit." (So says Charles



Julie Knowles, of Trowbridge, Wilts, concentrates on moving a mobile of plastic straws enclosed in a bell jar—it turned 60 degrees. ***National Enquirer*** **26 Oct 1976. Professor John Hasted with some results of experiments with junior mind-benders . . . curled metal sealed in a glass sphere; a folded metal strip (left); and 4 metal rods (in glass case).** ***National Enquirer*** **15 Feb 1977.**

McCreery in his *Psychical Phenomena and the Physical World,* 1973). It is only the familiarity of limb-moving that obscures its mystery. The cases of telekinesis and poltergeist activity given above are roughly analagous, let us say, to involuntary muscular action, eg Parkinson's disease or Dr Strangelove's arm. We also find, however, volitional telekinesis.

THE TELEKINETIC KIDS

Following Geller's first British broadcast on 23 November 1973 (see FT2p5) people all over the country began to discover their own paranormal powers. Mark Shelley, 7, of Ipswich, found he could bend cutlery by rubbing it and thinking hard. A journalist who witnessed his power in action said it took about 20 minutes. The next evening, on TV, five children were claiming similar abilities, including Russell Jennings and Alison Lloyd, both aged 11. Joseph Greenless, of North Somercotes, tried with his 11 yr-old son Kevin to bend cutlery without success. After lunch however, he was astonished to discover that the bars of a budgie cage had bent out of shape. *Daily Mail, Daily Mirror* 28 Nov 1973; *Sun* 30 Nov 1973; Scunthorpe *Evening Telegraph* 27 Nov 1973.

A couple of spoon-benders were reported from South Africa in 1974: Sheri Ableman, 10, and David Friedman, 15, both from Johannesburg. When David met Geller, Geller said he was the 11th junior metal-bender he had come across, the other 10 being in England "under close research", some only 5 yrs-old. Apparently they were mostly children of divorced parents. By May 1975 magician David Berglass in England was offering £5000 for conclusive evidence of metal-bending by inexplicable means. Among those taking part in the nation-wide competitions were Philip Jesney, 12; Terry Pickering, 8; John McNeill, 13; Mark Henry, 11; and Malcolm Holland. Said Keith Newton, 10: "I don't really think about anything or feel different when I'm doing it. It just happens." So far as we know no-one collected off Berglass. Johannesburg *Star* 10 Aug 1974; *Rand Daily Mail* May or June 1974; *Daily Express* 4 Nov 1974; *Reveille* 7 March 1975; *Daily Express* 22 & 23 May 1975.

Six girls tested by Dr Brian Pamplin at Bath University in September 1975 were spied upon by scientists through special mirrors and were caught cheating. "Instead of benders I found twisters," said Pamplin. Angry parents subsequently claimed that the conditions were wrong – the place was too hot and brightly lit – and the girls weren't given much time, and felt they were obliged to produce results. Susan Clark, 12, cheated because she felt pressured. Her mother said she had been bending things paraphysically for two years. Julie Knowles, 14, didn't cheat, but nevertheless failed the University test. Previously she had bent knives, forks and scissors – even the buckles of her shoes disintegrated when she absent-

mindedly fiddled with them. By the end of the year Julie was being studied by Prof John Hasted, of Birkbeck College, London University, who had helped develop radar in WWII. She managed to rotate, by 85 degrees, an object floating on water under a glass dome (see photo), and bend a metal bar without touching it. She was also able to predict accurately the major 1976 Chinese earthquake (see FT18p18) and the Moroccan invasion of the Spanish Sahara. One day she met herself in the street. "I heard a noise like footsteps in a corridor. I turned around and I could see myself. It was all misty round my feet." She was living near UFO-infested Warminster and said she had seen UFO occupants several times in her mind. "I've heard them talk once but it didn't make sense," she said. *Sunday Mirror* 14 Sept 1975; Bath & West *Evening Chronicle* 3 Oct 1975 & 3 Feb 1978; *Reveille* 5 Nov 1976; *National Enquirer* 26 Oct 1976.

Professor Hasted also did experiments with four schoolboys between 1975-1977. Nicholas W, 18, was able to bend three door keys suspended on wires 13 feet away in an adjacent room. "After a few seconds, Nicholas told me: 'I think they're bent now.' To my utter amazement two of the keys had snapped and the third was still bending." The experiment was repeated successfully too. The boy also twisted two pieces of metal around each other in a spiral and stood them on end... from another room; and bent pieces of brittle metal 180 degrees in his pocket without touching them. Andrew M, 12, was able to twist paperclips into a column sealed inside a glass globe in another room. Willie G, 14, could make straws swivel while they floated on water inside a glass jar. And Graham P, 15, snapped a zinc bar simply by stroking it. Graham's mother described strange events that often happen to him, recalling classic poltergeist phenomena: "On two occasions I have found him squatting on top of a door, lodged between the door and the ceiling. He tells me it just suddenly happens...he finds himself floating through the air. When Graham is ill objects fly through the air towards his head. He has no control over it at all." *National Enquirer* 15 Feb 1977.

Researchers like Genady Sergeyev with his work on Ninel Kulagina in USSR, and Prof John Taylor of London have tried to show that telekinesis and metal-bending are mediated by low frequency electromagnetic radiation coming from the human body. Indeed Kulagina was shown to emit biomagnetic pulsations in rhythm with her brain pulse when moving objects from afar – see *Psychic Discoveries behind the Iron Curtain* by Ostrander and Schroeder (Abacus, 1973, 1977), and *Superminds* (Palladin, 1976) by Prof Taylor, in which is also detailed his experimental work with child metal-benders. (It should be noted that Prof. Taylor has once more reverted to scepticism, his change of mind being fully documented in *Alpha* 1, March 1979). Prof. Hasted thinks differently, favouring the "many worlds" school of quantum theory. In this school's view there are an infinite number of "worlds" which do not normally interact because they are naturally orthogonal, ie at right angles to each other. Hasted hypothesises a convoluted "active surface" or interface between two "worlds", which travels through space and may posses rotational properties affecting metal-bending. (See his article 'Physical aspects of Paranormal Metal-bending' in *Jour.SPR* 449: 779; Philip Creighton's article 'Bent Spoons, or Bent Reality' in *Flying Saucer Review* (known as FSR); 24:1; and Tom Bearden's article 'Species Metapsychology, UFOs and Cattle Mutilations' in FT26p14-20, for further discussion.)

Dr Richard Muttuck, senior physicist of the Orsted Physics Institute in Copenhagen, tested Lena Duns, 17, every two months between June 1974 and June 1975, during which time, he says: "Her powers never failed. She was successful in moving and bending objects 100% of the time." Under strictly controlled conditions she bent thick nails by stroking them; bent a nail sealed in a glass tube; boosted the temperature of a thermometer by 9 degrees Fahrenheit while holding the end opposite to the bulb; sent a compass needle swinging through a 30 degree arc without touching it; and advanced the hands on a wristwatch 3 hours just by holding it. *National Enquirer* 28 Oct 1975.

The spectacle of secret hordes of kids with powers over ordinary objects might invoke fantasies of wish-fulfilment. Will they hold the world to ransom ? Will they use their powers for gain, or be used in turn in a new form of psychic warfare? The children themselves seem to relish the attention their abilities gain them more than their possible applications. Mark Shelley (see above) seemed to speak for many when he said: "It seems a waste of time doing this (spoonbending). I'd rather play football for Ipswich." The more adult benders imply the only limits to their powers are the limits of imagination. Alejandro Baez, 37, a civil engineer from Mexico City, can put himself into trances during which he has moved chess-pieces 20 feet away in another room, and made chalk, suspended over a blackboard, swing leaving a half inch mark. These experiments were witnessed by Dr Carlos Trevino, head of the Mexican Society of Parapsychology, another doctor, a psychologist and a Jesuit priest. Said Baez: "Under self-hypnosis I can step out of my body and I'm free to voyage where I wish." *Reveille* 18 July 1975.

RUSSIAN MOVES

Quite a bit has been written about Ninel Kulagina, 54, alias Nelya Mikailova (qv. Ostrander & Schroeder). She has been studied by many eminent Soviet scientists. We have reports of further wonders by her. In one experiment a beating frog's heart was placed in a glass jar about 2½ feet away while she concentrated on it, willing it to beat faster or slower – cardiograms confirmed the heart response. Five minutes into the experiment she willed it to stop beating – and a second heart was stopped in 23 minutes. Genady Sergeyev of Leningrad University said: "Ninel drew energy somehow from all around her – electrical instruments proved it. On several occasions the force rushing into her body left burn marks as long as 4 inches on her arms and hands. I was with her once when her clothing caught fire from this energy flow – it literally flamed up." Once she burned the arm of a Finnish scientist, Dr Jarl Fahler, just by touching him, even though a thermometer next to his flesh registered no change. The red burn marks lasted several hours, but had completely gone the next day. She also transmitted heat to the arm of Dr Keil, a psychology professor from the University of Tasmania. This time a thin sheet of lead shielded her hand, apparently preventing a burn developing. Several times in experiments – during which she has moved, from a

distance, objects weighing over half a pound, and been filmed moving others – Kulagina has herself lost several pounds and fallen unconscious. In 1975 she had a heart attack, and the strain of her wild talents was implicated. *Daily Mirror* 18 March 1968; *Sunday People* 14 March 1976; *National Enquirer* 24 Aug 1976.

At the end of 1975 we had a report on the psychokinetic powers of a hospital research technician, Felicia Parise, 37, from New York, studied by Charles Honorton, director of parapsychology research at the famous Brooklyn Maimonides Medical Center. Felicia caused a bottle to move in a 4 inch curve and back again. Observed by Dr Graham Watkins at Duke University, she rotated a compass needle 15 degrees West and held it there for 25 minutes, during which time it was totally unresponsive to a magnet brought near it. Watkins compared her to Kulagina – in fact Ms Parise said her powers developed just a few months after seeing a film of the Russian woman in action. "I lost about 15 pounds in the first weeks of doing this," she said. "I perspire freely; sometimes my nose and eyes run and I tremble. It takes a tremendous physical effort – such an effort that I can hardly speak afterward." A movie was made in her apartment of her mentally moving a water-filled plastic vial, several corks, pieces of tinfoil and a compass needle, all under a glass bell jar. Her ESP and telepathic abilities were also found to be remarkably developed. *National Enquirer* 30 Dec 1975.

Alla Vinograd, 42, tested by Dr Victor Adamenko at the National Institute of Normal Physiology in Moscow, could move objects weighing up to half a pound and make a light bulb, lying on a table, flash on and off. And Boris Ermolayer, 36, during experiments at Moscow University under Prof Venyamin Pushkin, was able to levitate a pingpong ball, a matchbox, several pencils and plates. Plates were the easiest, he said. *Sunday People* 14 & 21 March 1976.

FRENCH LEVITATOR

Tests in France at the begin of 1976 brought another object levitator into the limelight, Jean-Pierre Girard, 33. Physics professor William Wolkowski, of Paris University, Swedish physicist Georg Wikman, of Goteborg University, and Dr Raymond Viltage, senior lecturer in chemistry at the University of Orsay, outside Paris, all witnessed Girard move 15 fountain pens placed on a concrete floor 3 feet away from him – and than levitate four of them, causing them to hover 5 inches off the ground for 30 seconds. "The tests were done under laboratory conditions," said Wolkowski. "I'd set up a metal meter to test for hidden magnets, and an electroscope to detect any electrical or electromagnetic disturbances." Further feats included mentally bending a fat steel screw 20 degrees in a sealed container held by Wikman; changing the colour of heat-sensitive crystals by gazing at them; and causing a thick coin in a reporter's hand to curl.

More tests were conducted by M Charles Crussard, research director of the metal firm Pechiney Ugine Kuhlmann. Girard was apparently able to produce martensite-like transformations in metals by paranormal means. (Martensite is a component in a hardened steel produced in a normal way by a complex heat treatment.)

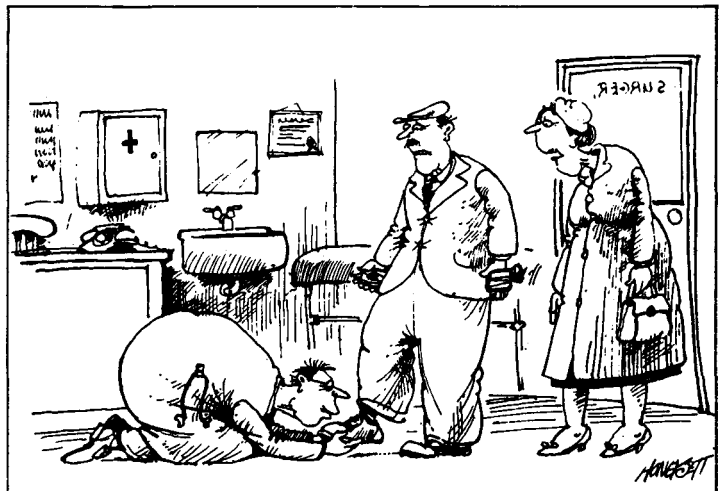
In November 1977, Girard attended the first International Congress on Paranormal Phenomena, in Mexico City, where he moved various objects from a distance, and bent a solid bar of titanium alloy. The performance was videotaped. However, he failed a 2 hour test in a Paris lab on 19 January, directed by physicist Yves Farge, and organised by the French TV channel TF1. He complained that he was hampered by the short duration of the test. Various researchers have pointed out the significance of the disposition – hostile or supportive – of those present during this kind of performance. Failure might well be due to an unfriendly atmosphere. *National Enquirer* 17 Feb 1976 & 3 June 1978; *Observer* 11 July 1976.

In the *New Scientist* 16 Feb 1978 (p431) Crussard's experiments are discussed, and Girard is cited as admitting "he sometimes cheats to avoid disappointing the public, but insists that he nevertheless has genuine psi power." Interestingly Crussard asserts that arch-demystifier James Randi has psychic power too but refuses to acknowledge the fact, although using it to inhibit Girard's during a test!

BENDERS GALORE

Professor Hans Bender, the investigator of Annemarie Schneider, in 1976 kept a watchful eye on Sylvio Meyer, 34, from Berne, Switzerland. In an experiment at Freiburg University's Institute of Psychology, Meyer stroked a plastic spoon which promptly bent. Said Bender: "We were just about to put the spoon bent by Meyer on the table to

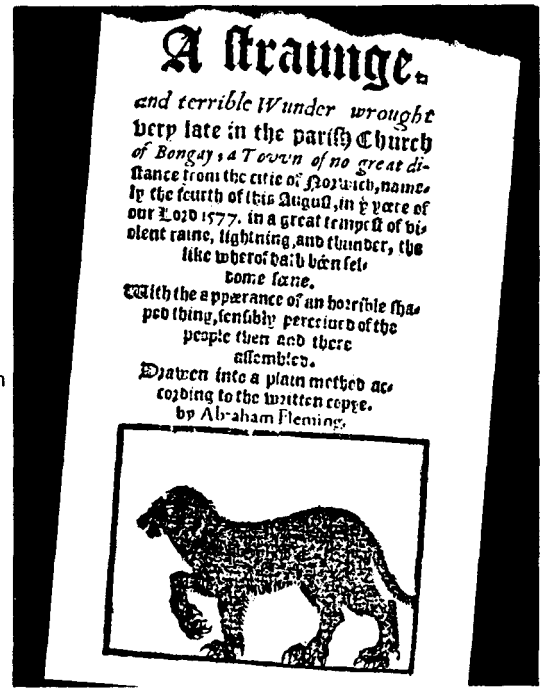
continued on p20



"His stigmata's playing him up again, Doctor."

Strange and Wonderful News

For the greater part of its history mankind universally believed in the correspondences between astronomical events and unusual natural phenomena, bizarre occurrences and the mysterious rhythms of growth and decay. Peoples of all nations and times believed that such phenomena stimulated or preceded changes or critical events in the affairs of men, for better or for worse: a magical cosmology that reflects the workings of the unconscious and which is inborn in each of us, and has only been denied by the recent dominance of scientific materialism. The ephemera of earlier centuries are gold mines of records of strange phenomena for the modern Fortean, and illustrate the historical continuity of phenomena which still happen today. It is only the fashions in explanations which have changed. Leslie Shepard has contributed learned introductions to many books, written a few himself, and edited the massive ENCYCLOPEDIA OF OCCULTISM AND PARAPSYCHOLOGY, published last year by Gale of Detroit. He has a particular interest in early Broadsheets and street literature, and offers this guide for the Fortean.


A ſtraunge.
and terrible Wunder wrought very late in the pariſh Church of Bongay, a Towne of no great diſtance from the citie of Norwich, namely the fourth of this Auguſt, in ỹ yeare of our Lord 1577. in a great tempeſt of violent raine, lightning, and thunder, the like wherof hath bẽ ſeldome ſeene.
With the appearance of an horrible ſhaped thing, ſenſibly perceiued of the people then and there aſſembled.
Dyawen into a plain method according to the written copye.
by Abraham Fleming.

Broadside ballads were the printed sheets of verses sold by hawkers and pedlars for four centuries since the dawn of printing. Chapbooks were cheap pamphlets of news, songs, jokes, riddles and stories. While books and newspapers proper were the literature of the well-to-do classes, the street literature of balladsheets and pamphlets catered for poorer people. They were a printed folklore, in which traditional tales of battles, heroes and folk myths merged with love songs, religious rivalries, bawdy ballads and topical events. They were also the protest literature of their day. Essentially, they were the forerunners of the popular cheap newspaper and today's mass media of paperback books, radio and television.

Because of the class divisions of earlier society, balladsheets and chapbooks were much neglected as sociological and historical materials until the scholarly study of folk music was stimulated by Bishop Percy and his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* in 1765.

Balladsheets and chapbooks are of particular interest as popular journalism in recording stories of prodigies and portents, the 'strange and wonderful news' of comets, earthquakes, monstrous births, weird aerial phenomena and other unusual events that were the front-page news, so to speak of their time. Most but not all of the broadsides were in verse, while the chapbooks were mainly prose. In practice, it is difficult to make absolute distinctions between chapbooks and other pamphlets except perhaps in bulk and price. Larger pamphlets were known as 'small books'.

There was much interaction between high and low literature, and often strange news of the day was printed equally in street ballads, news pamphlets and the more substantial small books. Sophisticated writers copied popular tales and beliefs into their books and plays. Shakespeare refers frequently to street ballads, although it was fashionable to disparage these as a kind of unreliable yellow press.

From the sixteenth century onwards, public fascination with marvellous events was reflected by ballads and pamphlets about monsters, human and animal. The word

'monster' comes from a Latin root meaning 'to warn' and suggests an awful event to be interpreted as an omen. The birth of monsters was regarded as a sign of God's wrath with a wicked world, and the penny broadsides as well as the pamphlets made monsters the excuse for moralizing about the sins of the day. In the year 1562 alone, there were five monsters reported – two children and three monstrous pigs, while in 1566 a ballad described twins joined together at the stomach and another monster born with ruffs around its neck. In 1568 there were popular verses on a monstrous child born at Maidstone, Kent, with a mouth slit on the right side like a leopard's ('terrible to behold'), the left arm joined to the breast, with stumps on the hand, the left leg growing upwards towards the head, and the right leg bending to the left leg, with the foot growing into the left buttock, and also with a strange rose-shaped hole in the middle of the back. The verses were captioned 'A warnyng to England':

This monstrous shape to thee, England,
Playn shewes they monstrous vice,
If thou ech part wylt understand,
And take thereby advice.

Symbolic morals were drawn from each abnormality, rather in the style of the hieroglyphs in prophetic almanacks.

In the popular superstitious atmosphere of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, all unusual events were considered omens, and a comet or an earthquake ranked equally with a monstrous pig or fish as a signal of divine reproof. Because of this, many broadside and pamphlet stories of marvels are somewhat exaggerated. Some reports of monstrous fish may have referred to nothing more remarkable than sharks, whales or cuttlefish. However, one fish story suggests a mermaid: *The most true and strange report of A monstrous fishe that appeared in forme of a woman from the wast upward Seene in the Sea* (1604). Stories like this prompted Shakespeare's sly humour in *The Winter's Tale,* when the pedlar Autolycus offers his balladsheets: "Here's another ballad. Of a fish that appeared upon the coast on Wednesday the four score of April, forty thousand fathom above water, and sung this ballad against the hard hearts of maids; it was thought she was a woman, and was turned into a cold fish, for she would not exchange flesh with one that loved her. The ballad is very pitiful and as true."

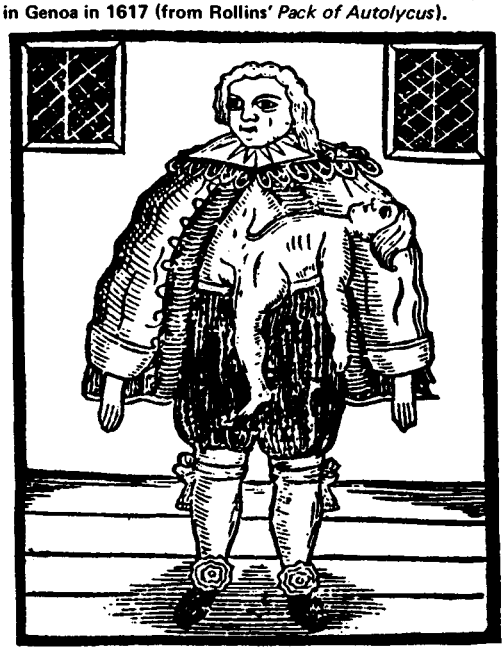
Because people believed in marvels, the ballad writers and pamphleteers sometimes invented them. Nobody, for example, seriously credits the story in 1614 of the 'strange and monstrous serpent (or dragon) Lately discovered... in Sussex, two Miles from Horsam' who slaughtered 'both Men and Cattell by his strong and violent Poyson.' Another dragon story (in 1609) is titled: *The worldes warning of an Alarum from sinne by the vision of 2 Dragons seene fightinge in the ayre neere Gaunte.* Another aerial vision was: *Strange fearful & true newes, which hapend at Carlstadt, in the kingdome of Crotia* in 1606, when 'The sunne did shine like Bloude nine dayes together and... two Armies were seene in the Ayre, the one encountring the other... also a Woman was delivered of three prodigious sonnes, which Prophisied many strange and fearefull thinges, which should shortly come to passe'. In 1580, *A Blazyng Starre or burnyng Beacon, seen the 10. of October laste (and yet continewyng)* was interpreted as 'Gods province, to call all sinners to earnest & speedie repentance.' Typically Fortean is the 1597 story in both pamphlet and ballad of the rain of blood and brimstone which deluged the city of 'Strale Sonet'. Less credible is the 1620 ballad of *The Lamenting Lady* who mocked a woman who had borne twins (it was a folk belief that this indicated two lovers). The unfortunate lady was punished by herself giving birth to no less than three hundred and sixty-five children, one for each day of the year, at a single delivery!

One persistent theme in ballads and chapbooks was the Pig-faced Lady, immensely rich, who needed a husband. This fable lingered in popular belief for nearly three centuries from 1639 to 1815, and seems to have originated in folklore.

The moralizing of prodigies and natural disasters was turned to account as political propaganda at periods when religion and politics were inextricably entangled. One of the most famous examples of such propaganda is the three volume collection of tracts *Mirabilis Annus* (1661-2), which lists fifty-four signs in the heavens, twenty-three on earth, ten on water and twenty-seven judgements on individuals. These were regarded as divine signs against the iniquities of the Crown and the Anglican Church. An earlier work in the same style was Henry Jessey's *The Lords Loud Call to England* (1660) which catalogues 'judgements or handiworks of God, by earthquake, lightning, whirlwind, great multitude of toads and flies, and also the strikings of divers persons with sudden death'. Such material is fascinating to the student of Forteana.

Even late eighteenth century chapbooks and broadsides recorded strange stories, such as the 'most surprizing savage girl who was caught wild in the woods of Champagne, a

(Left) **Record of the famous 1577 'Black Dog' incident at Bungay, Suffolk.** *(Below)* **An Italian with parasitic twin, born in Genoa in 1617 (from Rollins'** *Pack of Autolycus***).**



province in France' (1795) or the poltergeist which moved furniture and other objects in *An authentic, candid, and circumstantial narrative of the astonishing transactions at Stockwell... on... the 6th and 7th January, 1772.* A popular subject in the early part of the nineteenth century was the astonishing story of Kaspar Hauser, the mysterious foundling of Nuremberg, reported alike in pamphlets, newspapers and books. Even though chapbooks and small books were often penny-a-line rehashes, they are still valuable to the researcher for the light they shed on popular beliefs of the time. It was an early European chapbook which gave author Bram Stoker circumstantial material on the real-life Dracula.

But there are special difficulties in separating fact and fiction. Most of the nineteenth century chapbooks of the prophecies of Old Mother Shipton are uncritical rewrites of earlier stories, and Mother Shipton herself appears to have been entirely mythical. To make matters worse, the nineteenth century authority on street literature Charles Hindley perpetrated a hoax in adding to Mother Shipton's mythical prophecies some modern ones of his own, in which the world was supposed to end in 1881. These verses created a minor panic at the appointed time, and in spite of Hindley's subsequent confession, the verses are still often quoted as authentically those of Mother Shipton, notwithstanding her own nonentity!

Like the oral tradition of folklore from which the printed tradition of broadsides and chapbooks grew, it is difficult to disentangle the mythic view of life in which real and imaginary events were reported uncritically and interpreted in the light of the religion or philosophy of their time. It was not until the more pragmatic outlook of the nineteenth century, with a developing rationalism, that fact and fiction began to be more clearly discerned. But while the educated classes were beginning to enjoy more accurate standards of reporting in newspapers, these were still too expensive for the working and lower middle classes, who relied upon the sensationalist and catchpenny news in verse, retailed on the penny ballad-sheets. Indeed, the folklore tradition of singing the news did not finally die out until the end of the nineteenth century. Of persistent fascination were the Dying Speeches and Confessions of criminals, at a time when public executions were still a popular holiday spectacle. These were a survival of the sixteenth and seventeenth century last farewells of political and religious prisoners before execution, but many of the nineteenth century sheets were written long before the actual event!

Somebody once said: 'History is what actually happened folklore is what people thought happened.' The student of history as well as the lover of the bizarre and strange, and the researcher into Fortean phenomena of past ages, will all find broadside ballads and pamphlets of great interest and fascination, especially if studied in conjunction with the sophisticated literature of their times. The folklore element of myth-making and even deliberate fabrication must be given special attention, since the recurring belief in certain phenomena is closely related to the framework of religion and philosophy of any given period. Folklore is also timeless, and certain types of phenomena are persistently reported through many centuries and ironically find validation in actual occurrences from time to time, as nature follows art.

Even in modern materialistic times, fantasy plays as large a part in our everyday lives as fact, and the plea of escapism hardly does justice to the paradox. Where ancient civilizations nourished the imagination by other-worldly stories of gods and goddesses and the nostalgia of ballad heroes, a modern world has a special place for the ritualized mock battles of football and baseball, and the endless fictions of novels and television screens. And after all, we already spend nearly half our lives in the world of dreams.

Woodcut of a 'monstrous birth' in 1654, of a child, a serpent, and "a lapping toad", (from Rollins' *Pack of Autolycus*).

Fact is important in its correct context, but fiction is not simply phoney fact. I believe that myth is the poetry of the human psyche, and facts are sometimes less meaningful than allegories, dreams and intuitions. Modern history has shown how materialistic societies without creative dreams and ideals degenerate into a morbid fantasy of vandalism, violence and senseless destruction.

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Leslie Shepard March 1979

THE FIRST EMPEROR'S ARMY

In May 1974, members of the Hsiyang Village People's Commune, in Lintung County, were digging a well. Four metres down, they discovered a life-size terracotta warrior's head, and hands and body soon followed. Their report to the county authorities was passed on, and the State Cultural Relics Administration sent archaeological workers to the site. And as the summer went on, the First Emperor's terracotta army was exposed to the daylight for the first time in almost 2,200 years[1].

The site, 30 kilometres east of present day Sian, in Shensi Province, is part of a complex of remains centred round the ancient capital city of Hsienyang. And the man responsible for building this 'underground place' lies two kilometres to the west, in a vast mausoleum known as 'The Mound of Li' (standing just north of Mount Li, with which it is often confused). He was Chin Shih Huang Ti, China's first unifier.

There had been 'Emperors' before, but the Shang (1766-1121 BC) and Chou (1121-256 BC) dynasties could hardly claim overlordship of the entire country. Indeed, Chou rule was completely bankrupt by 480 BC, China being divided up into a number of petty states. During the two and a half centuries that followed, half a dozen of the major states fought amongst themselves for control. Finally, the state of Chin conquered all its rivals, bringing the 'Warring States' period to an end and establishing the Chin dynasty (221-206 BC).

Cheng Chao was born in 259 BC, son of King Chuang-hsiang of Chin, whom he succeeded at the age of 13. Twenty-five years later, he had conquered the entire country, and taken the title *Chin Shih Huang Ti*, 'First Emperor of Chin'. Revelling in Imperial grandeur, he was a builder on a monolithic scale, being responsible for roads, canals, the Great Wall, no less than 270 palaces and a mausoleum that took 38 years to complete, surrounded by underground palaces. And in one of these he put his army.

Excavations are by no means complete; in fact they have barely begun, and proceed with the slowness one would expect from a team of six archaeologists assisted by spare-time peasant and commune workers. But it is estimated that there are 6,000 life-sized figures buried there, and about 100 chariots (perhaps the magic number 108?) The complete vault is 210 metres from east to west, 60 metres north to south, and from 4 to 5 metres deep. When last we heard, a strip at the eastern end had been excavated; an area of 1,100 sq. metres out of the total 12,600, in which 591 figures and 24 horses had been found; and three test-pits, one at the western end, the other two in the centre.

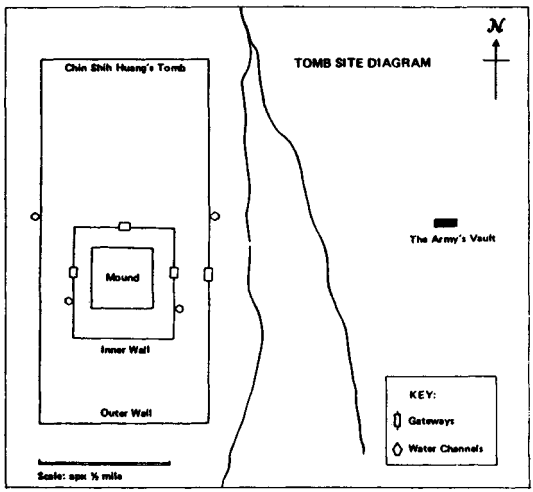
The army faces east, away from the tomb. On all sides, rows of soldiers three deep face outwards, surrounding six columns of chariots and three of soldiers. The vault was originally roofed over, and five entrance ramps have been found, leading down into the eastern end of the vault (or perhaps they are *exit* ramps?).

Each soldier stands between 1.75 and 1.82 metres high, and is constructed in four basic parts: body, hands and head. And each warrior is individually fashioned, with varying posture and costume and differing facial features. Some are intent, others arrogant, smiling or courageous; as if an entire (living) legion had posed for their own individual statues. There are archers, spearmen, swordsmen, and they were all armed with real weapons, many of which have been found with them. Spearheads, arrow-heads, cross-bow mechanisms and many truly beautiful bronze swords have been found. The swords especially have retained their lustre and sharpness over 2,200 years, and spectro-analysis throws some interesting light on the state of ancient Chinese metallurgy. Apart from the basic copper and tin, the swords contain 13 other elements: nickel, magnesium, aluminium, zinc, iron, silicon, manganese, thallium, molybdenum, vanadium, cobalt, chromium and niobium. Other finds have included objects of gold, jade and bone, iron farm tools, linen, silk and leather; 10,000 relics in all.

And the chariots were real, too, though their wooden frames have stood up less well to the ravages of time and fire. According to the historian Ssu-ma Chien (2a&b) when the Chin dynasty fell to Hsiang Yu in 206 BC, he burned Chin Shih Huang's palaces, both above and below ground,

The statues show a wide variety of individual expressions and differing facial characteristics.

STEVE MOORE



Chin Shih Huang was obsessed with numerical symbolism, and especially with the number 6. No large-scale accurate maps of his tomb have been available to us, but the simplified map we have does suggest some interesting numerical ratios.

The outer wall of the tomb is 108 units by 48. The inner wall is 33 un.north to south, placed 50 un. from the north (outer) wall and 25 from the south; it is 30 un. from east to west, and placed 9 un from the side walls.

The burial mound is 18 un. square, placed 6 un. from the north (inner) wall and 9 from the south. It is 6 un. from both (inner) side walls.

The tomb complex is aligned to the cardinal points, and the Army's vault lies 66 un. east of the outer wall. Our calculations suggest that each unit measures 66 (Chinese) feet, but this is not confirmed.

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and there is evidence of this fire in the charred remains of the chariots, columns and roof-boards. Each chariot was drawn by four horses, also modelled in terracotta, and standing 1.23 metres high. These too are extremely life-like, especially in their facial features. Each chariot contained three or four men, and was accompanied behind by 12 foot soldiers.

In the earlier Shang and Chou dynasties, it had been the practice to bury chariots, together with living horses, charioteers and slaves, to serve the Emperor in the next world, though by the Warring States period this barbarous practice had been stamped out, giving way to small pottery figurines instead. The first Emperor's legion probably served the same purpose, though this is the first time life-size figures have been found; and the sheer quantity is astounding. At the present rate of excavation, it will probably be years before the entire legion has been unearthed, but there is talk of restoring the vault to its original roofed glory.

TALES OF THE TOMB

What I find truly astonishing is that only two kilometres away lies the actual mausoleum of Chin Shih Huang, its position known (it never having been 'lost') and yet completely unexcavated. I can imagine few western archaeologists being able to keep their spades and trowels out of a potential treasure-house such as this for long, let alone confine themselves to minor, if notable, sites related to it. And yet there it remains, with a fair possibility of being intact from the day it was sealed. Both Topping(1) and Cottrell(3a) state that Hsiang Yu broke into the tomb when he burned the palaces, but there is no mention of this in Ssu-ma Chien in either his biography of Chin Shih Huang (2a) or of Hsiang Yu (2b); merely that the latter burnt all the palaces, and the fire burned for 3 months. There do not seem to be any other recorded desecrations.

Building of the tomb commenced as soon as Cheng Chao assumed the throne of Chin at the age of 13, and was not concluded until a year after his death in 210 BC. Ssu-ma Chien (2c) has this to say of it:

"As soon as the First Emperor became king of Chin, excavations and building had been started at Mount Li, while after he won the empire more than seven hundred thousand conscripts from all parts of the country worked there. They dug through three subterranean streams and poured molten copper for the outer coffin, (an alternative translation by De Groot (4a) suggests that the entire crypt was made of copper, as protection against the three streams) and the tomb was filled with models of palaces, pavillions and offices, as well as fine vessels, precious stones and rarities. Artisans were ordered to fix up cross-bows so that any thief breaking in would be shot. All the country's streams, the Yellow River and the Yangtse were reproduced in quicksilver and by some mechanical means made to flow into a miniature ocean. The heavenly constellations were shown above and the regions of the earth below. The candles were made of whale oil to ensure their burning for the longest possible time."

Ssu-ma Chien has been vindicated as a historian so often of late, as in the evidence of the burning of the underground vault mentioned above, that we suspect much of his description may be accurate. Many wonders may be found within; and also, unfortunately, the bones of the artisans who designed the tomb's defences, immolated with their secrets, and also of the First Emperor's childless wives, murdered on the orders of his son.

The tomb was built as a square three-layered shape, like a 3-step pyramid, more than 300 metres per side (i.e. bigger than the great pyramid), oriented to the four cardinal points. It apparently consisted of brick or stone-lined chambers, with earth heaped over the top, and stood some 50 metres high. The tomb stood at the centre of an 'inner city' or 'spirit city', containing sacred stone tablets, inscribed soul towers and temples, and this in turn lay within an 'outer city', about 1000 metres east to west, 2,200 metres north to south and surrounded by a wall 7 metres broad at the base, with watchtowers at the corner. These walls and outbuildings have virtually disappeared. Only the tumulus remains above ground.

There is speculation that there may be corresponding underground vaults to the north, south and west of the tomb, perhaps containing life-size figures of officials, ministers and court ladies, though we have no reports of any exploratory digs that might be going on to find them. We do have a brief mention that figures of female court attendants were unearthed 'some time ago', but absolutely no details of their

form or location. Perhaps these supposed other vaults will also have to wait for accidental discovery.

A certain amount of folklore has built up around the tomb, too. Writing before the discovery of the vault, Cottrell (3b) mentions that the mound was supposed to have been connected with Mount Li by subterranean passages; and that the mound is only the 'Great Gate', leading to the actual grave, which is within the mountain. There the Emperor's wooden boat-shaped sarcophagus floats on a quicksilver sea, always moving just out of reach if you try to get hold of it. And another story in the same source relates that buried within the mound are Chin Shih Huang's "Ascend the Cloud Boots", which enabled him to ascend to heaven, his "Drive the Mountains Whip", and his "Measure the Fields Rod" which when waved in the air caused the defeat of his enemies.

And we have another interesting tale, drawn from the *Miscellanies about the Western Metropolis* (4b), a work variously attributed to Ko Hung (circa 290-370 AD) or Liu Hsin (1st C BC). It is said that two statues of *ki-lin* (the Chinese 'unicorn', though hardly akin to the western beast) which had once stood on the grave at Mount Li, were removed to a position near the Palace of the Five Tsoh Trees. They were 13 feet tall. The left foreleg of the animal on the eastern side was broken off, and the fracture secreted a red, blood-like substance. The elders said the substance possessed supernatural power, and the populace took it as a tonic.

Before leaving Chin Shih Huang, we might also record that excavation work is being carried out at the ancient capital city of Hsienyang itself, which lies 15 kilometres north-west of Sian. Excavation began in 1960, and was resumed in 1974, and has mainly concentrated on the Hsienyang Palace, the hereditary home of the Chin kings from the time of the city's foundation in 350 BC. The palace grounds cover 6 km east to west and 2 km north to south, and are centred in the northern part of the Yaotien commune. Some 1,000 relics have been discovered, though the finds are by no means as impressive as at Hsiyang, being mainly of architectural significance. Many decorated bricks and tiles have been found, as well as some severely damaged murals. Pottery, bronze hinges and knockers, iron nails and jade ornaments have been found, as well as silk fabrics, some of which were carbonised (presumably by fire). The palace had at least two storeys, and may have stood 17 metres high. See (5) for more details.

GRAVE UNDERTAKINGS

While dealing with the wondrous interiors of famous graves, I may as well give an airing to one of my favourite tales. It concerns the tomb of Chuko Liang (181-234 AD), the sage, strategist and inventor mentioned last issue. The story is undoubtedly apocryphal, if not entirely mythical; but worth telling nonetheless. It is said that the Emperor Hung Wu, the first sovereign of the Ming dynasty (reigned 1368-1398 AD), and his councillor Liu Po Wen, found themselves in the neighbourhood of the tomb, which lies in the Ting Chun mountain, and determined to visit it. As was the custom of the time, both were wearing iron armour; yet they managed to force an entrance and found themselves in an ante-chamber. There they saw an inscription to the effect that the grave's occupant would bind the hands of any visitors, and indeed, in squeezing through the narrow entrance to the grave, they had had to wedge themselves so as to be incapable of using their arms. From the ante-chamber, they broke down another door, and found themselves in a second chamber. This contained several figures made entirely of loadstone, which attracted the armour of the intruding 'guests'. Terrified at the unknown force which was dragging them forwards (though the loadstone was known to the Chinese from the time of Chin Shih Huang onwards), they cast off their armour and fled. Though not before noticing another inscription, which Dennys (6) renders thus:

"I'll strip off the skin
Of who ventures in
To open this my grave."

As may be gathered, the Emperor and Liu did not stay to survey the tomb in detail, and it was closed once more. The tradition of the visit is still allegedly recounted by neighbourhood story-tellers, though whether it had any basis in fact, we know not.

The story may well be nothing more than folklore, typical of the sort of tale that springs up about the tombs of famous men, especially those reputed to have had some skills in the magic arts. A similar tale is told of the grave of Confucius (6th Century BC) though he was hardly a magician, and comes from the same source (6). Confucius's disciple, Tze-kung, is said to have covered his master's coffin with loadstone. And here our tales wind about full circle, for it was the First Emperor, Chin Shih Huang, who came visiting. The First Emperor was not fond of Confucian scholars; he had 460 of them buried alive at one point in his illustrious career; and thus his approach to the tomb was somewhat less than reverent. He ordered his soldiers to open the tomb, but the loadstone attracted their pickaxes and armour, making the work impossible. Thus the tomb of Confucius was never violated. As to whether there is any truth in this story either, I can only say that I have...*grave misgivings!*

SOURCES:

1. Material on the excavations at Hsiyang is drawn from the following:
   Peking Review. Vol. 18, No 30 (25 July 1975) p21.
   Chinese Literature. 1975, No 10 (October). p109-110.
   Chinese Literature. 1975, No 11 (November). p102-107.
   China Pictorial. 1975, No 11 (November). p22-25.
   China Reconstructs. Vol 25, No 2. (February 1976) p38-42.
   National Geographic. Vol 153, No 4. (April 1978) p440-459. ("China's Incredible Find", by Audrey Topping)
   New Archaeological Finds in China, Vol 2. (Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1978) p59-64. ("An Art Treasure-Trove of Chin", by Tu pao-jen & Han Han).
2. *Records of the Historian,* translated by Yang Hsien-Yi and Gladys Yang (From the 'Shih Chi' of Ssu Ma Chien) Commercial Press Ltd, Hong Kong, 1974. a) p195. b) p221. c) p186.
3. *The Tiger of Ch'in,* by Leonard Cottrell (1962). Pan Books, London, 1964. a) p195. b) p173-5 (quoting largely from *The Great Wall of China,* by W E Geil, John Murray, London, 1909).
4. *The Religious System of China* by J J M De Groot. (Leiden, 1892-1910) Reprint: Literature House Ltd., Taiwan, 1964. Book 1, Vol. 2. a) p399-401. b) p823.
5. *China Reconstructs.* Vol. 28, No. 2. (February 1979) p64-66.
6. *The Folklore of China,* by Nicholas B Dennys. (London, 1876). Reprint: Oriental Press, Amsterdam, 1968. p135-136.

Steve Moore is associate editor of Fortean Times.

continued from p13

photograph it when he said, 'Wait! It's going to break.' And before our eyes it snapped in half!" Meyer also placed a Swiss franc on his forefinger. In less than a minute it flopped over his finger like a Dali clock, bent almost double. *National Enquirer* 4 Jan 1977.

Commenting on Meyer's feat, Russell Targ of the Stanford Research Institute said: "I don't know of anyone else, including Uri Geller, who has demonstrated a psychic influence on plastic." But even in our few examples some plastic items are mentioned. Not long after, we had note of another plastic bender. Orlando Bragante, 17, was tested by Dr Aldo Martelli at Bologna University. By concentration he straightened paperclips in his hand, bent keys from a distance, as well as steel and plastic bars, and a fork in a sealed container. *National Enq* 27 June 1978.

A couple of children who could bend things just by picking them up... Emma Waters, 11, of Forest Row, Sussex, put the usual kinks in cutlery, as did Gloria, the 2 yr-old daughter of famous psychic Peter Hurkos. However Gloria also bent several dentist's high-carbon drills merely by touching them. Said the Los Angeles dentist, Dr Peter Doerken: "Afterwards, I tried to bend one of them back, but because the steel is so hard it broke." Hurkos claims she has inherited psychic powers from himself, just as he had done from his mother. We remember elsewhere reading that his psychic abilities developed after he fell from a ladder onto his head. Perhaps there is something here worth investigating since the legendary Eusapia Palladino and the proto-Carrie, Andrea Kolintz (see above), also linked the emergence of their powers to head injuries. *National Enquirer* 16 March 1976; *News of the World* 9 Jan 1977.

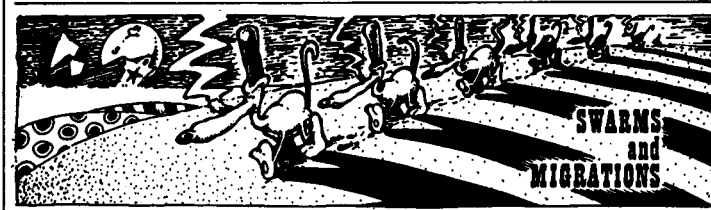
At Drexel University, in Philadelphia, Karen Getsla, 32, gave physicists food for thought by bending a 9 foot laser beam. "We monitored every possible occurrence around Karen — temperature both inside and outside the laser, air flow, humidity, vibration, sound and barametric pressure," said biophysics researcher David Faust. Karen stood on a wooden platform about a foot from the laser, put her hands against the walls of the cubicle, which surrounded her, and rocked back and forth. She was able to repeat the laser-bending effect several times in each 5 minute experiment. *National Enquirer* 7 Feb 1978.

Elaine Fortson, 44, managed to exert a quarter-pound pressure on a metal beam without touching it, when tested by Dr Will Franklin at Kent State University, Ohio. She also set a pendulum in motion by a glance, while another next to it remained stationary, and sent self-generated electricity down wires to repeatedly flip a switch. Her other talents included reading a doctor's case histories through sealed brown envelopes by placing her hands on them; and psychically locating a crashed plane on a hillside in North Carolina. *National Enquirer* 21 March 1978.

Michael Morse, 9, of Anaheim, California, was tested by Dr Jerry Cunningham, of Pepperdine University, Los Angeles. 25 broken watches were spread out on a table in front of him. He passed his hand over them said he thought he could "fix" about 7 or 8. In the event he mended 6 just by holding them. In another test he successfully identified the suit of the odd card out in a line of playing cards lying face down in 12 out of 20 tests. The chances of doing this by guesswork, we are told, are less than 1 in 2000. *National Enquirer* 29 March 1977.

Finally a couple of enigmatic aspects of these powers — if that's what they are. On 3 November 1978, Mrs Elizabeth Sandys-Pemberton 78, was in hospital in Hampshire, while Uri Geller was making a broadcast from the top of the Blackpool Tower. While eating her lunch, a fork fell across a newsphoto of Geller's eyes, and bent 90 degrees. Portsmouth *News* 9 Nov 1978. Then, to deepen the mystery, let me mention what happened on the Day of Innocents 1978, when stage magician Jose Diaz appeared on Spanish TV posing as 'Professor Mendoza' with paranormal powers. Thousands called TV and newspapers, nevertheless, with claims that the 'Professor' had indeed mended their clocks and bent their spoons. *Daily Mail* 30 Dec 1978.

Credit: Alan Cleaver, Chris Holtzhausen, Peter Hope-Evans, George Ives, John Michell, Tony Roberts, Peter Rogerson, JDM Start, Nigel Watson, Ion Will. PS



The last few years have seen proliferations of many kinds of insects and animals beyond the usual seasonal fluctuations in their populations. Our last listing of swarms was back in 1977 (FT20p21-23),so it's about time we had another.

ANTS

Britain's hospitals have been facing a growing nuisance — plagues of tiny yellow-brown Pharaoh ants. Teams from afflicted hospitals throughout Britain attended crash courses in combatting these and other pests (eg the cockroach) at Wexham Park Hospital, Slough, Bucks — according to the *Daily Mirror* 24 October 1978. Then — the irony of it — just months later, Wexham Park has to close a large surgical ward after it was overrun by ants. *London Evening Standard* 7 January 1979. But that was nothing compared to previous invasions. An entire 17-storey block of council flats, at World's End, Chelsea, became infested for a short while in 1976 (London *Evening Standard* 25 November 1976), a situation which was repeated in another council block, this time at Erith in Kent, causing the residents to petition Bexley Council for action. *Kentish Independant* 21 September 1978. Earlier that same summer, Kent suffered a bigger plague of ants, affecting the town of Deal and blamed on the dry weather (!). London *Evening News* 14 June 1978. Huge swarms of flying ants caused chaos on the seafront at Southsea, Portsmouth, Hants, in September 1978. Four old age

pensioners were driven off a golf course; one lady's pink cardigan became a living black garment; and cars pulled over as ants covered their windows. Portsmouth *News* 23 Sept 1978.

Strange how things come and go... The *Sunday People* 6 March 1977 announced a programme to breed ants after a "massive heath blaze" killed millions – an estimated three-quarters of their population – at Hartland Moor, near Wareham, Dorset. It seems they were being studied by the nearby Institute of Terrestrial Ecology at the time and their work was also destroyed in the fire, otherwise the disaster would not have been detected. Then in November a huge colony of red ants – estimated at about 300 million, and believed to be the world's largest "of its kind" – was found in Switzerland. *Daily Mirror* 4 November 1977.

In 1976 a warning was issued by American entomologists that the dreaded fire ant could multiply throughout the southern States. Already there had been tales of lingering deaths and ruined crops (see FT20p22) as this native of South America, which has periodically scourged the South for the last 25 years, took advantage of the warm weather and the dwindling use of Mirex, a pesticide potent to fireants but no longer manufactured after it was suspected of causing cancers in laboratory animals. Georgia is estimated to be two-thirds overrun, and parts of Mississippi have as many as 200 of the 2ft ant mounds per acre. This danger was brought to our attention again recently by the announcement that fire ants now infest 230 million acres in nine States, and have split into two varieties, a black kind in Texas and the south and a red kind in the east. In South America the ants are kept in line by other ants who attack and kill their egg-laying queens, but in the absence of natural predators and suitable chemicals their spread to the western States is estimated at 50-100 miles a decade. They are called fire ants because of their powerful toxic venom – in most cases it causes an itchy welt at the bite, but has been known to cause shock, infections and gangrene. In 1976, one-year-old Mary Harper, of Taylorsville, Mississippi, crawled into a bed of fire ants and was stung 70 times.These ants hang on with large jaws, jabbing repeatedly with their stingers. Within minutes she was gasping for breath as her top lip ballooned to block off her nostrils. She would have died there and then had her father not been a doctor and quick witted. Even now, Mary has to have monthly injections of a fire ant desensitizer, and probably for the rest of her life. Less lucky was an asthmatic in Holden Beach, Florida, who died during an ant attack earlier this year. The latest death occurred at the end of January when a salesman in Vidalia, Georgia, felt a painful bite in his foot – within an hour later he had died of a cardiopulmonary arrest. *Newsweek* 26 April 1976; *Toronto Sun* 16 February 1979.

FLIES, APHIDES AND LADYBIRDS

In the summer of 1976 the east and south coasts of England experienced an astonishing invasion from the Continent, only these tourists were ladybirds, thriving on a hot summer that followed a mild winter (see FT20p21). One naturalist writing in the 'Day by Day' column of the Scunthorpe *Evening Telegraph* 25 January 1977, noted that usually the bugs vanished as the weather got cooler, but this year there had been so many that: "Right up to the recent frosts, one came upon batches of them, or saw them scattered on the pavements in most unexpected places...I had not realized they were a hibernating species, but there is no other way of accounting for the rows of little red bodies in the overlap of wooden fences, chinks in walls, under loose bark, etc."

After the veritable orgy of eating these huge swarms embarked upon there couldn't have been an aphid or greenfly left in England, and yet come July 1977, we hear of huge aphid infestations covering "hundreds of thousands of acres" of crops in southern and eastern England, particularly threatening the corn crop. One source said that aerial spraying organizations were using every available pilot and hour of daylight to nip the plague in the bug, as it were, and relying on the tiny red army of ladybirds to eat the stragglers. I kept my scissors at the ready but not a single note of ladybird abundance that summer did we see... *Daily Telegraph* 16 July 1977; *Sunday Times* 17 July 1977. In August came the answer to their prayers – not the ladybirds which were by now acknowledged to be unexpectedly low in numbers, but huge swarms of hoverflies. Although migratory, these swarms were said to have been "blown across the Channel from Holland" as though by Providence. Sunbathing girls screamed when masses settled on them, open-air concerts were abandoned. Between Broadstairs and Bournemouth, and on the East Anglian coast, dead flies were heaped "for miles" At first these harmless small wasp-like flies were declared a pest, but a month later they were heroes as their larvae made inroads on the aphids. *Daily Express* 19 August 1977; *Sunday Telegraph* 19 Sept 1977. And last summer the ladybirds were on hunger-strike again, it seems, as swarms of greenfly sent holiday-makers scrambling off beaches at Skegness, Lincs. *Sunday Mirror* 30 July 1978.

A correspondent to the London *Evening News* 3 July 1978, asked where all the flies had gone that summer, Where indeed? – it seemed as if the country had been abandoned. But we do have notes of swarms of other kinds of flies than houseflies and bluebottles. Unidentified flies, in swirling clouds numbering thousands, drove people from the beach and seafront at Whitstable in Kent, about midday on 16 May. A spokesman for the Natural History Museum in London suggested a low-tide and humid conditions encouraged the swarm, but our correspondent Valerie Martin notes that day had a cold east wind despite being sunny. *Whitstable Times* 19 May 1978. In August, residents of the Tullibardine area of Auchterarder, Perthshire, complained about a plague of flies. They blamed a nearby potato dump, described by a Tay River Purification Board spokesman as "a quagmire". But James Fordyce, the potato merchant who owns the dump, is protesting too – he says the flies are not potato flies and are coming in from the Fife coast. *The Scotsman* 14 August 1978. In September, tens of thousands of tiny ant-like flies descended on the Belgian town of Chatelet, near Charleroi, covering trees, cars and buildings. Charleroi *Le Rappel* 11 Sept 1978; *Le Soir* 14 Sept 1978. And in Florida a relatively new pest – the citrus black fly – was threatening crops for the third year , and being fought with stingless wasps imported from Mexico. *Time* 28 August 1978.

SPIDERS, MILLIPEDES AND SNAILS

1978 got off to a good start for spiders. A plague of deadly funnel-web spiders affected hundreds of homes in Sydney.

Reports say they were maddened by both their "mating season" and the heat-wave. One woman was bitten to death, and two others seriously ill in hospital. *Daily Express* 12 January 1978; *Sunday Express* 5 February 1978. In Arizona a plague of black widow spiders gave birth to a new sport – nighttime gettogethers at which neighbours drunk beer and chased spiders with sticks and flashlights. This abundance is described as "unusual". *Time* 28 August 1978. Black widows popped up in England too, though only four of them, and mercifully dead. They were found in a crate of spare parts for Lynx helicopters which had been undergoing tropical trials in California. The box was opened after routine "de-bugging" by mechanics at a Ministry of Defense base at Boscombe Down Airfield, Wiltshire. Then came unconfirmed rumours that more spiders and hundreds of eggs were found in a hangar on the same base. A spokesman assured us all that the cold would have killed them all anyway. One report said that the last time black widows reached England from America was in 1970, when a young man working at the USAF base at Lakenheath, Suffolk, was bitten as he pulled on his trousers. Then a middle-aged woman, living near the base, was bitten while sitting on the toilet. Apparently nesting under toilet seats is favoured by the nasty little devils. Ugh! *The Sun, Daily Express, Daily Mirror, Daily Mail* all 20 Sept 1978.

Millions of millipedes invaded Floyds Knobs, Indiana. The residents of this small community couldn't keep them out, even with kerosene, turps or oil filled moats around their houses, and they have become reconciled to the sound of crunching underfoot. One, Thomas Picket, said: "They move *en masse*... millions of them. One night my neighbour's truck just spun on the roadway because he couldn't get any traction on them." Pickett himself puts a coat of paint on his bed legs so they don't crawl all over him. The inch long insects, which don't bite or sting, first appeared in June 1978, brought out, according to one expert, by a hot dry summer following a mild winter. He suggests they are looking for moisture and decaying vegetable matter. Worthington, Minnesota *Globe* 28 August 1978.

In September 1977 there was a massive invasion of NE India by African snails. The people of Dimapur, about 74kms from Kohima, in Nagaland, were waging a continuous war to save their crops. The snails were said to number "lakhs" (hundreds of thousands). Calcutta *Sunday* 2 October 1977. Snail wars were also reported from California, although this one pitted snail against snail. In 1977 Halix aspersa, a large brown snail, was gobbling up gardens and vegetation along freeways and roads and generally the bane of gardners everywhere. It is known that it was originally introduced to the area by those who love to eat snails, but as usual in such introductions, the absence of natural predators stimulated a population explosion. Ted Fisher, a biologist at the University of California at Riverside, was commissioned by the California Transportation Department to develop a biological control, and had the idea of pitching cannibals against the vegetarians. The cannibals – Rumina decollata, a smaller faster breeding snail that thinks other snails are good enough to eat – were already adapted to the Californian environment, although no one is quite sure how or when they got there, like the Helix, from Europe. Fisher bred thousands and turned them loose. He says it'll be three years before the plans effectiveness can be assessed. *International Herald Tribune* 11 July 1978.

WORMS AND SHRIMPS

In 1976, the migratory armyworm ate nearly $20 million worth of corn, peanuts, soybeans and other crops and pasture, in Georgia, USA. The damage was nearly matched in 1977, in Georgia and Virginia, when the drought added to the voracious worms' hunger, causing them to eat anything in their path. Jacksonville, Florida, *Times-Union* 1 April 1977; Newport New, Virginia, *Daily Press* 19 Sept 1977. By 1978 the army worm was reported in Pennysylvania and Maryland (estimated 75% crop loss) attacking the corn along with the corn-ear worm and the European corn borer. In California lygus bug infested cotton was sprayed with an insecticide which also killed off the bollworm's predators – so farmers are dreading a bollworm resurgence. *Time* 28 August 1978.

Masses of migrating worms brought trains to a slippery halt on a steep railway in Japan, as they covered the tracks. *Daily Mirror* 5 Oct 1976. Similarly, millions of worms disrupted train services in Bulgaria. *Daily Mirror* 16 May 1970. It is unusual to hear of mass migrations of earthworms, but a note recently came to our attention. A correspondent had written to the *Gainsborough News* 6 June 1975, that a friend had witnessed the event in daylight in Gainsborough, Lincs, during a spell of wet weather. "One day recently while walking along the pathway of The Avenue, she saw... in front of her...a moving, heaving mass of earthworms, a wide track from out of the dyke bottom, up over the pathway slabs, on over the road to the grass verge on the other side of the road. Just a live trek moving ever forward to some unknown destination, regardless of any hazard or obstacle. The traffic on the road was just crushing through them, leaving writhing, wriggling or flattened worms – not a pretty picture". Another migration, this time a vertical one. Millions of small-finned greenish worms 2-4 inches long, which usually live in lagoon mud, surfaced in Venice's Grand Canal on 17 May 1977. *Daily Telegraph* 18 May 1977.

Worms and creatures in your tap water...it seems to happen more often that you'd think. When Tubifex worms were found in the supply of an anonymous hospital, the cause was quickly located – the loft space contained dead birds, feathers and droppings, and undoubtedly the birds that used the place contaminated the water tank which had no lid. London *Evening Standard* 11 July 1977. More puzzling were the harmless shrimps found in tap water at Corby, Northamptonshire. Local officials said they'd flush them out, but we suspect there was little they could do but flush themselves. *Daily Express* 25 Oct 1977; *Sunday People* 30 Oct 1977. A year later, authorities in Essex dealt with worms in the pipes by adding Permethrin, allegedly harmless to humans. We wait and see... *Daily Telegraph* 2 Oct 1978. For 2 days (1 & 2 Sept) unidentified fuzzy half-inch red worms slithered from water taps in the Lafayette Parish community, near Broussard, Lousiana. Water engineers put a standard dose of chlorine into the supply, and then a second dose when it became apparent the first was not enough. Eggs or larvae had somehow penetrated their filter screens, and although the problem was

The curious regimented swarming of the Processionary Bombyx, as they march out of their nest.

cleared quickly, local residents still shudder when they turn on taps. *Daily Mail* 5 Sept 1978; *Grand Rapids Press* (Michigan) 6 Sept 1978.

The townsfolk of Elphin, Co. Roscommon, in Ireland, were flabbergasted when they protested to water engineer Joe Corcoran about the bodies in their water. Terrt Leyden, a member of the Dail, the Republic's parliament, said: "Elphin has the most wretched water in Ireland. It's not fit to be put in whiskey." Cornered Corcoran tried elfin humour. "It's one of our tests," he bluffed. "If the creatures are alive then the water is safe to drink." This did not amuse Elphin councillor Seamus Scott. He roared: "How would you like to look in a glass of water and see things swimming in it and then drink it?" Joe declined his offer. Later in a council meeting, Scott brandished the English reportage of the incident. "Even an English newspaper thinks it is a farce," he said. The council was given a report on a major new water supply scheme for the area, but I imagine the news raised more fears than it was intended to quell – the source for the scheme was named Polecat Springs! *Reveille* 9 & 23 June 1978.

The most recent case to hand of shrimps thriving in tap water comes from Northamptonshire, where a months-long cleansing operation of underground mains has begun after families complained about their squirming liquid. *Sunday People* 29 April 1979.

Our final shrimp note is of Wellingborough, Northants, where the water supply was discoloured for 4 weeks over August and September 1978, as engineers tried to flush out tribes of thriving shrimps. They said that the shrimps were harmless and the water still fit to drink – but would you? *Daily Telegraph* 25 Aug 1978.

CATERPILLARS AND GRUBS

Spring, in London, heralds the itchy season as millions of Brown-tailed moth larvae hatch, and their irritating hairs fall on skin or clothes on washing lines. This menace has been noticeable in the last 20 years, some say several centuries, and has got increasingly worse since the mild winters of '75 and '76 followed by hot dry summers encouraged their breeding. Although they can be found throughout southern England no one seems to know why they favour the north bank of the Thames, from Canvey Island to Tower Hamlets, nor how they got there since they are not natives. We mentioned the 1976 invasion in FT20p22...but the only note we have for 1977 is simply a warning from health authorities to be prepared. London *Evening News* 23 June 1977. If they hadn't appeared by June it's likely the nuisance was minimal that year. Another mild winter brought fears of a large plague in the spring of 1978, and many boroughs were asking for the authority to compel home owners to search for and destroy the cocoons in their gardens, and some sent leaflets to homes in their area. The Natural History Museum stepped in with an idea they said proved popular and effective "in the 1700s": – a bounty on every bucketful. *Kentish Independent* 9 Feb, 6 July 1978; *Kentish Times* 9 Feb 1978; *Daily Mirror* 8 Feb 1978; *Daily Mail* 10 Feb 1978; London *Evening Standard* 26 May 1978; *Weekend* 13 Sept 1978.

As expected the confused Spring this year delayed the arrival of this irritating

pest, but also many nests had been destroyed, so their numbers were noticeably down in the Borough of Newham. However, Canning Town and a few other isolated pockets were as overrun as Barking was in 1978. As we work on the paste-up of this issue we learn that a plague of Brown-tailed moth caterpillars was wreaking havoc in the West Sussex Town of Chichester. *Barking & Dagenham Post* 14 June 1979; *Daily Telegraph* 21 June 1979.

But London's problems are tiny compared to the devastation by caterpillars in parts of Canada and the northern United States. The two main culprits are the spruce budworm and the forest tent caterpillar, which apparently swarm on a regular cycle, but according to a statement from the Center for Short-lived Phenomena, Cambridge, Mass, for the first time since 1955 the two cycles have coincided. Between them a vast swath of oak, maple, spruce, fir and balsam trees around the Great Lakes have been effected. In Maine alone an estimated 8000 square miles of spruce and balsam have been lost, and in Indiana 55 square miles of deciduous trees were completely defoliated. Minnesota, Michigan, Ontario and New Brunswick were also badly hit...or bit. And as if that wasn't enough, a 20 square mile area around Columbus Georgia was infested with another kind of caterpillar. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania *Evening News* 27 July 1977; *Newsweek* 15 August 1977; *Sunday Express* 18 Sept 1977. The same scourges remerged in 1978, afflicting the same areas only worse than before. In Maine cars were skidding on carpets of squished caterpillars. The forest tent caterpillar stripped an estimated 30 million acres in Ontario, where it is believed about 100,000 billion hatched within a few days of new buds opening – and in Vermont the devastation was the worst in 25 years among the maples and other hardwoods. However, Vermont was saved by a mysterious disease which killed off many millions of the caterpillars. An estimated 150 million acres of spruce and fir have been infested and largely defoliated by spruce budworm in Maine and southern Canada. *Observer* 25 June 1978; *Time* 28 August 1978.

The same late summer saw a relative, the eastern tent caterpillar, devastating orchards in Georgia and other southeastern States, right up to the Rocky Mountains. This scourge which hits wild cherry trees, peach, plum and apple trees, is said by the Georgia Dept of Agriculture to be the worst in 10 years. Not surprisingly we find the menace has a cycle of 10 years. *Extra!* (USA) Oct 1978.

In Majorca millions of unnamed caterpillars munched their way through the island's pine woods for the fifth consecutive year, despite tons of insecticides, isolation breaks created by felling thousands of trees, and the latest ploy, the issue of a million shotgun cartridges to blast the football-sized nests. The locals are worried – legend has it that 500 years ago a Moorish prophet predicted the island would flourish only as long as the pine groves. *Sunday Express.* The pine forests of Sutherland and Western Caithness are also under attack from furry hordes of Pine Beauty caterpillars. They are indigenuous to Britain having a taste for the Lodgepole pine, and also known on the Continent (as the Owl moth) where it favours the Scots pine. In 1977 they stripped around half a million trees in north Scotland, despite insecticide spraying. In 1978 a stronger insecticide was used – but apparently to little effect. Already this year the Forestry Commission has warned that they may pose a worse threat to these Isles than the Dutch elm scourge. *Daily Telegraph* 19 May & 19 June 1978, & 9 Feb 1979.

When a green army of caterpillars marched down a tree into her garden, a housewife in Bournemouth, Dorset, went understandably berserk. She managed to phone the council, and when workmen arrived they found her singlehandedly fending off the onslaught by rushing round madly, flatting all she could see with a hammer. Messy! *Sun* 4 July 1978.

In June 1978 we also learned of a plague of caterpillars of the Umber moth, uncommon in Lancashire but nevertheless swarming in millions in the Alum Scar Wood, on the Woodfold Estate at Pleasington, near Blackburn. Oddly the swarming is confined to the wood, defoliating all kinds of trees. At Lumb Bank Farm, which borders on the wood, they tell of the eerieness of walking down the lane with fine threads hanging from the trees in place of leaves. Gordon Moulden, of the farm said: "It's just like a horror movie. There are threads hanging all over, and you walk into them. You can hear the caterpillars eating and moving about – it sounds like it's starting to rain." *Guardian* 17 June 1978.

We have considerably more material on swarms of lice, fleas, ticks, maggots, beetles and bugs of all kinds, jellyfish and other marine nuisances, but we'll have to unload these some other time.

Credit: Gary Abbott, Larry Arnold, Jeremy Beadle, Lionel Beer, Paul Burd, David Fideler, Mark Hall, RTA Hill, Peter Hope-Evans, Nick Maloret, Valerie Martin, Paul Pinn, Henri Premont, Ken Rogers, Peter Rogerson, Paul Screeton, Leslie Shepard, Anthony Smith, Has Thomas, Nigel Watson, Dwight Whalen, Ion Will, Jake Williams. **RJMR.**

Occasionally in our gleanings we come across intriguing hints of occult criminology, as though paranormal abilities were being used secretly, sometimes for gain, but more often for the utter confusion of us mortals.

THE PHANTOM WALLBANGER

The area around Danby Street, Peckham, in south east London, was the cause of some excitement between July and September 1977; excitement and devastation, for someone, or something, was attacking garden walls with some relish. By the end of September, 25 walls had been damaged or destroyed, and there were said to be 'dozens of unrecorded incidents.' Despite continuing watches by police and residents,

no one seems to have been arrested... nor was the wallbanger even seen in the act.

The damage varied: sometimes an entire wall would be knocked down, at other times there would be damage to pillars and canopies, at other times merely the top-section would be knocked off the wall. Sometimes householders would hear two or three loud thumps, and then rush out to find their wall shattered; at other times, there would simply be the sound of the collapsing brickwork. And no one ever saw him do it.

At first, police and residents logically assumed that *someone,* armed with a sledgehammer or pickaxe, was responsible, and thus the press coined names like 'Harvey Wallbanger' and the 'Phantom Wall Smasher.' An identity was even invented for him... an out-of-work bricklayer who was making work for himself. Children were discounted, for though some of the smaller walls could have been been pushed over, others required great strength to destroy. And if such was the wall-banger's design, he could have reaped a large profit; damage ran from a minimum £20 per incident to several hundred pounds.

And they should have been able to see him, or at least to have seen him running off. The first victim had finished tidying his garden in the evening, merely nipped into the house to get the milkbottles to put out, and returned to find no wall. Other attacks seem to have taken place mainly at night (though never on a Tuesday night) and residents have been at their windows in seconds. And two separate residents told police that they had been keeping watch, then turned away from the window for no more than a few seconds, only to turn back to see dust settling round broken bricks. Even so, there was no one to be seen. By the time of our last clipping, there was talk of a 'ghost wrecker'; perhaps an acknowledgement that the Phantom Wallbanger might be less or more than human, after all. *Daily Mirror, The Sun* 24 August 1977; *The Job* (Metropolitan Police newspaper) 30 September 1977.

...AND HIS THIEVING FRIENDS

We sometimes like to speculate that the universe takes a dislike to a certain spot or building, and unleashes 'mysterious forces' to eradicate the construction. Or perhaps there are human thieves of such audacity and know-how that they can achieve the absurd. In Shickshinny, Pennsylvania, police were hunting for a gang who allegedly stole a 150 foot long dry stone wall from the property of John Levyak. *Sunday Express* 12 September 1976. And in France, police were also searching for a gang of thieves, after Pierre Lestienne and his family drove to their prefabricated seaside cottage at Dunderque, only to find it... gone! London *Evening News* 8 June 1977. And if these seem ordinary enough, ponder this: members of a British Railways cricket team turned up for their first match of the season at their ground at Hartlebury, near Kidderminster. Alas, the pavilion had disappeared! And just *how* do you steal an eight-room building without anyone noticing? *Reveille* 9 June 1978.

And there was a fair amount of pondering by police in Hillsdale, Michigan, on 14 July 1977. Someone stole 700 railroad ties from a storage area in nearby Hanover Township. The ties were worth $7,000, and weighed a hefty 122,000 lbs. And on the very same day, the DCA Food Industries wholesale distribution centre reported that their 30-foot wide cement loading dock had been moved five inches off its foundation by some unknown means. And that would certainly have been no pushover! *Jacksonville* Journal. (Florida) 15 July 1977.

THINGS THAT GROW RICH IN THE NIGHT...

Or perhaps there are occult gangsters, going about their invisible business and introducing a little chaos into our lives? Some may be giant, making free with our loading docks... and others diminutive, making free with our money...

Police in Buntingford, Hertfordshire, were looking for a very thin man, after a break-in at Wydiall Hall, home of city stockbroker Michael Boyd-Carpenter. A *very* thin man, for it was assumed that *someone* had crawled through a tiny catdoor, and then let in a gang of thieves. They got away with a valuable haul of silver. But... a *cat-door?* London *Evening News* 12 July 1974.

Or perhaps they have no substance at all... At Athens, our tale has a dignified beginning. Under the watchful eye of police, bank men and airport officials, $ 200,000 in cash was placed in crates, duly sealed, and loaded aboard a plane bound for New York. The creates made it in fine shape... but the money didn't. When the crates were opened at New York, not one single cent was found. *Sunday People* 4 September 1977.

59-year old Charlie, his wife Jaqueline, and their 17-year old son David, lived on the premises at the butchers, in St Marychurch, Torquay, Devon. But there was 'something evil' there which ruined both the business and a marriage of 32 years. Money kept disappearing. One morning they opened the safe to find the cashbox empty of £5 notes, though the locks on the safe and outer doors were untouched. And he was audacious, this spectral speculator. Even when the family slept with the money under their pillows, or held in their hands, still it would go missing. The family had the house blessed by the Reverend Michael Malsom, but still the cash disappeared. In final desperation, Mr Harding moved out, hoping to take the evil influence with him. No luck. At last, Mrs Harding and her son seem to have left the ghostly gangster behind when they too moved out, and were hoping to rejoin Mr Harding. But we can only wonder what happened to the next occupants... *Daily Mail* 14 May 1977.

TAKING DELIVERY

Sometimes the themes of our stories overlap and run into each other. From Malaysia we have a tale of a phantom midwife who turned her hand to kidnapping... and this only a week after the scare about the 'Bloodthirsty midwife' (recorded in our section on Vampires) had surfaced. We have met the kidnapping *Orang Bunian* (invisible forest elves) before in these pages (see FT 23 p 6). But now we have a new and curious tale, worth telling at some length...

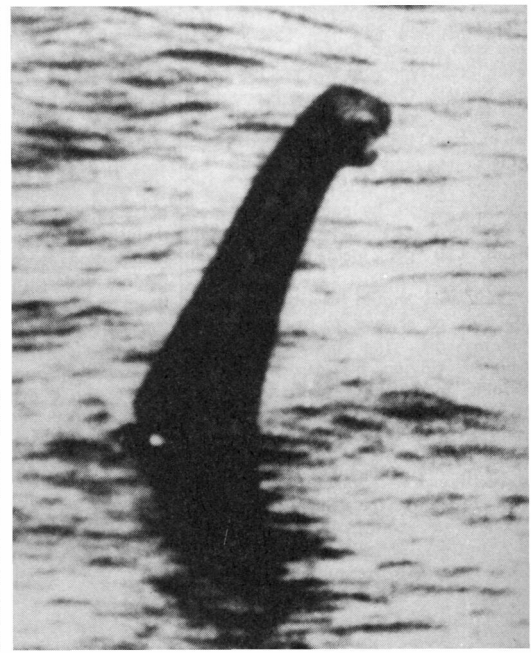
It concerns Ramlah Binti Mat, a 48-year old woman living at Kampung Perlis, about three miles from Balik Pulau, Malaysia. She already had a son, Asmawi, aged 6, and, when she became pregnant again, claims to have carried her second child for 13 months. In June 1977 she went to the Ayer Puteh clinic, about seven miles away, for x-rays and specialist examination. A nurse, Zainab binti Ahmad, confirmed she was preg-

continued on p37

Nessie: The Shiels 1977 Photos

In May 1977 Doc Shiels was lucky (!) enough to see and photograph Nessie. The story has been told in notes scattered through various issues of FT, and recently your editor summarised the saga for two USA Fortean magazines, PURSUIT and SPECULA. Our new format provides a good opportunity to show Doc's photo properly in colour for the first time in any Fortean magazine (see back cover). It also gives us the occasion to present the results of three photographic examinations by experienced investigators who have studied the colour slide original, and to establish what is known about the photos.

Enlargement of ANS-1



Enlargement of ANS-2

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE PHOTOS

Anthony 'Doc' Shiels is a professional wizard. Late in May 1977 he left his home in Cornwall, with the street-theatre group *Tom Fool's Theatre of Tomfoolery* (which comprises most of his talented family) for a working holiday at Lock Ness. About 8 am on the morning of 21 May, Doc, his wife Christine, and four others, watched three 'humps' break the surface of Borlum Bay, from the carpark of the Inchnacardoch Lodge hotel. They believe they saw three creatures rather than one many-humped one.

Later that afternoon, Doc and Christine sat in the grounds of Urquhart Castle – they had other sightings that day and kept a camera by them, primed. Suddenly up popped a head and neck about 100 yards away. Christine wasn't looking and Doc had time only to grab the camera and shoot two frames before the creature slid smoothly down out of sight. Describing the sightings and the photos, he said later: "...the part of the neck showing above the waterline must have been around 4 or 5 feet. Don't take any notice of what appear to be eyes... I could see no eyes as such in the original. The light patch above the mouth (if mouth it is, and I think it is) is merely a reflection of a kind of ridge...Skin texture, smooth and glossy. The animal was visible for no more than 4-6 seconds. It held itself very upright, very still, except for a

Photos copyright: Fortean Picture Library.

turning of the head and a straightening of the neck... It had powerful neck muscles. There is ... possible evidence of a parasitic growth at the back of the neck, on the dorsal ridge, as a pale yellow-green patch is visible near the water. Also in both pictures, a round pale object floats on the water close to the neck." Doc told us he thought it might be an empty McEwan's beer can.

The two medium-long shots of the head and neck were designated ANS-1 and ANS-2. The originals were taken on high-speed Ektachrome transparency film, in a Zenith EM 35mm SLR camera, at between f11 and f16 at 1/500th of a second, through a Chinon 135mm telephoto lens. They were developed professionally, back in Cornwall.

Copies of ANS-1, slightly enlarged, were made by a photo journalist, Frank Durham, and sent by Doc to many interested parties, including Jerome Clark, associate editor of *Fate* magazine and one of the field's leading Fortean and UFO investigators. The original was lent to Tim Dinsdale, the explorer and author whose own association with Loch Ness goes back many years, and who, in turn, showed it to many experts, including Sir Peter Scott, and Dr Vernon Harrison (until 1976 president of the Royal Photographic Society). All have expressed their conviction the transparency was genuine and showed a large unknown aquatic animal. ANS-2 was lent to another photojournalist, David Benchley, who made a glass copy-neg enlargement, before Doc packed the original off to his friend and colleague, the US magician Max Maven. Disaster struck! The envelope arrived empty. ANS-2 had vanished; and Benchley's glass neg broke! Fortunately Benchley had taken off a few trial prints, and the best of them, which we present here, contrasty though it is, is now the only remaining evidence of ANS-2.

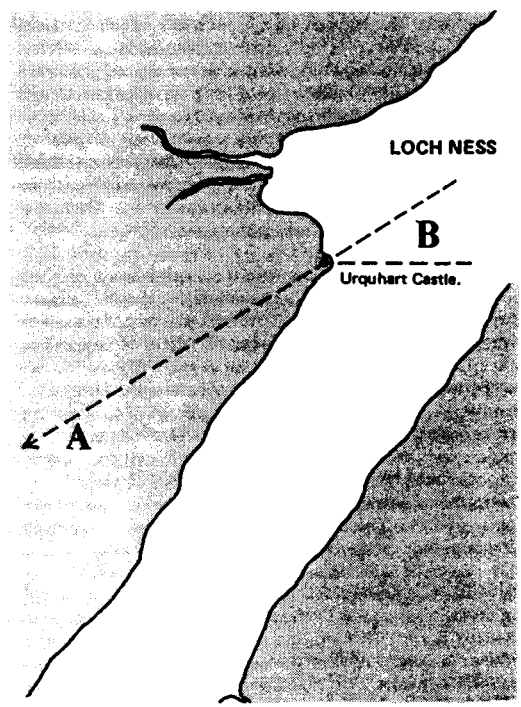
These two photos are the clearest still pictures of Nessie to date — one in colour — and as such constitute serious evidence for the existence of some kind of creature in Loch Ness. As such they deserve to be taken seriously and thoroughly examined both to corroborate their authenticity and for whatever additional information they might contain.

CONTROVERSY

Through the offices of Jerry Clark, one of the enlarged copy slides of ANS-1 made its way to William Spaulding of the UFO photoanalysis group Ground Saucer Watch (GSW). GSW attempted an analysis using computer-aided methods which they admitted were hastily assembled (from several other kinds of analysis programmes) and previously untested on 'monster' photos. Their basis for comparison was a "quickly acquired" selection of Nessie photos "digitized...for any patterns". Although their report was never fully published anywhere, a summary of their findings was given in FT24. Briefly, they found an "alarming" feature: the creature seemed to be transparent and waves could be seen "penetrating" the edges of the image. Its bright patches were said to be "unnatural" and the image was smaller than the apparent size and must have been further away than "100 yards" judging by wave size etc. They also commented on the lack of water displacement.

It was quite clear that GSW thought the picture was a hoax, although they don't say how. Rickard and Dinsdale (FT24), and Bord (see below) have expressed their own reservations about the GSW analysis. In the first place the copy slide which GSW saw, one of a small number sent to interested Forteans, was never offered as primary or first-hand evidence and never intended for analysis. In the second place, many of the results of the GSW analysis (image-flatness, loss of colour, increase of contrast, and the size anomaly) could be accounted for by the fact that GSW were looking at an enlarged copy transparency and not the original. Had they seen ANS-2 also, they would have noticed a strong displacement of water as the creature appears to turn slightly and straighten its neck before diving. Dinsdale also wonders if the apparent transparency of the creature as found by GSW might not be an 'artifact' of the electronic image enhancing methods used — a remark all the more interesting in the light of Colin Bord's examination (see below) of the remaining duplicates of the GSW slide in which this 'edge transparency' could not be found.

It is regrettable that GSW did not examin the original. Their own findings are far from conclusive (bearing in mind, also, the hastiness and tentativeness of their programme) and must remain conjectural until they are confirmed or not by any further examinations. Doc has never objected to the detailed examination of the ANS-1 original by experts — to the contrary, he has always encouraged it for whatever new information it would add to the subject. It would be a foolish faker indeed who hastened his own exposure in this way.



A map of the Urquhart Castle area of Loch Ness showing:
(A) a line pointing to the position of the sun ("up-sun") at 4 pm on 21 May 1977;
(B) the sweep of view within which the monster appeared, from the grounds of Castle Urquhart.

Recently other doubts have been raised: could the dense black patch in or on the water where the creature's neck enters the water be a shadow, or artificially produced by painting or as a composite picture? Another nagging question is why there should be a strong difference in contrast between the two pictures? The former questions are reasonably settled by the observations of Bord, Dinsdale and Harrison from their studies under high magnification. There is detail in that dark patch and it has the characteristics of a reflection, which in turn confirms the relative positions of the sun and photographer at that time and place. The question may have been stimulated by the black and white reproductions in FT22 and *Pursuit* Fall 1978, which simply do not do the colour original its due justice. Several stages of black and white rephotographing and photographic printing, and the mechanical process of screening or reducing to dots to make the printing plate, and the vagaries of printing itself tend to increase the contrast of any continuous toned photograph at each stage, effectively pushing the subtler tones towards white or black. The result is that the dense graduations of the darker grey in the reflection inevitably 'block in'. Although colour printing is subject to the same handicap, we hope that the laser colour-separation process used to make the plate on the back page will give a more helpful picture.

The difference in the contrast between the two photos is the result of different copying methods, as explained. ANS-1 is copied directly off the colour slide original. ANS-2 is probably the only remaining print (and not a good one) off a glass negative. The relation of this glass negative to the original print is not known precisely, but it is likely to be only once or twice removed from the colour original of ANS-2, both now lost to us. This glass slide was obviously intended for press reproduction and the contrast heightened deliberately in order to print the sort of image newspaper editors prefer (ie with less background, etc).

The mysterious dangers of the modern postal system are the only obstacle to further analysis — they've already claimed the original of ANS-2! Were it safe to do so we'd be only too happy to lend the original of ANS-1 to any sceptic for his own battery of tests and analyses. FT and FPL will attempt to procure a 'second opinion' here in the UK. In the meantime we offer the colour portrait of Nessie on the back page, printed as carefully as possible from a copy transparency prepared by Colin Bord to match the original for tone, colour and detail. We also take this opportunity to present the opinions of three expert examinations of the original of ANS-1, which go a long way to answering some of the questions raised.

COLIN BORD COMMENTS

As a co-founder of the Fortean Picture Library (in cooperation with Robert Rickard and my wife Janet) I am able to examine at leisure one of the two original frames of High Speed Ektachrome which Doc Shiels made at Loch Ness on 21 May 1977 and of which black and white reproductions have subsequently been published in FT22 and *Pursuit*, Fall 1978. I have been a professional commercial photographer for 25 years and have spent considerable time in studying the nature of light and its interactions with the physical world, as well as the problems involved with the reproduction of this interaction by photographic means and the subsequent reproduction of photographic images on the printed page by photo-mechanical means.

WHAT DO WE HAVE? First let me state what I know does exist. FPL has in its safe keeping the original 35mm transparency of the first of the two colour transparencies (ANS-1) that were shot by Doc Shiels on 21 May 1977. The film used was High Speed Ektachrome and the camera and the exposure details have been published in FT22 and *Pursuit*, Fall 1978. The subject is under-exposed by about ½ stop and has fully saturated colours. The image definition is good (i.e. it is a sharp picture). The image of the object within the 24X36mm frame (standard 35mm size picture) is approximately 2mm from top to underline (please note this is a measurement of the size of the **image, not** an estimate of the size of the object photographed). So you can see it is quite a tiny image in the centre of a large expanse of water. I have spent appreciable time studying this transparency through a high-powered magnifier. I have also projected it on a screen to get a picture approximately 3 feet high. This represents a magnification of approximately 40 times, giving an image of the object over 3 inches in depth. All who have seen this have been impressed, though sceptics are not necessarily won over immediately.

The general appearance indicates that a warm toned low-angle light is coming over the photographer's right shoulder and illuminating the object, and this agrees with the details of location and time which the photographer gave us. The areas of light and shade suggest that this object is three-dimensional and approximately circular in cross section.

The object naturally reflects from the surface of the water, the reflection being broken by wavelets which conform to the surrounding water pattern. Within the object's reflection can be seen small patches of the same blue as the surrounding water, where the surface of a wavelet has reflected the sky, indicating that this is a completely natural reflection, and that the water is reflecting it and the surrounds in a completely natural way. The pale tawny band does reflect in the water as would be expected and the image is naturally broken up by the wavelets, though the reflection does not have the same brightness as the original above it. The difference in brightness between this highlight and the rest of the reflection is very slight, and on the 8X6" black and white prints which I have carefully made via a black and white copy negative, the tonal variation is just discernible. A magazine reproduction made from such a black and white print would most likely lose this tonal variation unless it were made to the highest standards on a glossy paper. The loss of these tones in the shadows would cause the reflection to appear completely black. In fact, a study of the original transparency reveals that the highlight on the "teeth" appears to be no brighter than the brightest part of the pale tawny band on the front of the object. If it looks brighter in a magazine reproduction, that is due to the vagaries of the printing process.

CRITICISMS CONSIDERED. Now let us consider the objections:

1. Some critics reveal their confusion about the difference between shadows and reflections. This is not uncommon with people who are unfamiliar with both optics and photography. For a variety of reasons shadows can rarely be seen on the surface of water, especially at a distance. As the

transparency clearly shows that the sun is behind the photographer, criticisms based on the belief that the object is in silhouette (i.e. photographed with the sun shining into the lens) are quite irrelevant.

2. Some critics are apparently disturbed by the solid blackness of the reflection in the second picture (ANS-2). The difference between the two black and white reproductions is due to the fact that they were made from copy negatives made at different times by different people. The black and white copy negative used to produce the print of ANS-1 was carefully made by me working from the original colour transparency and I tried to retain maximum detail and tonal separation. The history of the print of ANS-2 is somewhat more involved. It seems that the second transparency was lost by the postal services en route to the USA. All that remained in England was a glass copy negative, very contrasty and lacking in detail. By the time the PFL had been formed and I was involved in the matter this glass negative had been accidently broken and all that remained of ANS-2 was a glossy black and white print of poor quality. I have made the best copy negative of this print I can, but when the mid-grey tones of a photograph have been lost by contrasty copying it is of course impossible to replace them.. When printing my copy negative of ANS-2 I have tried to match it to the tones of ANS-1. There is a little tonal variation within the 'neck' area of ANS-2 and the reflection does show some paler patches where the wavelets are breaking the image, but the tonal differences are so subtle that they will almost inevitably be lost when reproduced on a printed page. This happened when the pictures were reproduced in FT22 and although I have not yet seen the relevant issue of *Pursuit* I expect that it has happened here too.. Incidentally there are what appear to be a retoucher's brush marking the copy print of ANS-2, at the point where the neck enters the water. It looks as though some lighter areas near the underline have been 'toned down'. As this ANS-2 copy negative was made by a press photographer the retouching was probably done on the glass copy negative. The contrasty 'soot and white-wash' quality of this copy negative is typical of the type of negatives that newspaper blockmakers prefer to work from, as it gives a brighter reproduction on a poor quality newsprint than would a negative with a softer tonal range.

3. Forteans and Ufologists should not be dazzled by the phrase 'computer analysis'. A computer is simply a sophisticated electronic tool, and the usefulness of any tool depends on the skill and experience of the craftsman handling it. In the past GSW have revealed a very basic lack of knowledge of photographic technique and terminology, and most of the points of criticism made about the ANS-1 picture (and published in FT24) are ones which might be expected from the examination of a duplicate transparency. But they have no relevance to the original picture shot by Doc Shiels. As to their allegation that they can see wave ripples through the 'neck', I only wish this were true. I have examined the original at 40X magnification, but no wave ripples can be seen. I wish I could see some because this could support a theory advanced in the forthcoming book *Alien Animals* (written by Janet and myself, and to be published later this year). I have also examined an enlarged duplicate transparency similar to the one given to GSW, but can find no wave ripples in the 'neck' of this either.

CONCLUSION. If these pictures are faked, I cannot detect how it was done. Such fakes certainly could not be called "crude". If they were produced by double-exposure or superimposition, they would need the services of a skilled laboratory staff and have to be the work of a skilled and well-equipped photographer. Having met the man, I do not think that either his photographic equipment (a fairly simple SLR) or his knowledge of photo techniques are up to it. The alternative is that he took a boat out into the loch with a buoyant life-size model abroad, popped it into the water, went ashore, photographed it twice in such a way that it changed shapes between shots, and went out again to retrieve it. All this on a fine afternoon in May at a famous tourist attraction. I find it simpler to believe in the existence of water monsters.

COLIN BORD
26 March 1979

TIM DINSDALE COMMENTS

I met Doc almost by chance about three years back when down in Cornwall investigating the Morgawr sea-serpent reports – and found him to be a quietly spoken, educated and amusing fellow, in contrast to the image he seems to create of himself of a somewhat wild eyed and outspoken eccentric. Later we corresponded at length about his undoubted encounter with Morgawr and the photos he and his co-witness obtained. Having had such a vast amount of correspondence with 'witnesses' at Loch Ness and Loch Morar over the years one gets quite good at assessing the veracity of their accounts by the manner in which they are presented. Certainly in Doc's case I got the feeling I was corresponding with a man of refreshing wit and honesty – with a real interest of both the paranormal, and the enigmatic but solidly real phenomena from Ness and Morar (vide 400 yard 'V' wakes for instance).

2. Subsequently, when he obtained the two colour stills at Loch Ness of a 'head and long neck-like' object in late May 1977 – my interest was aroused and I was intrigued by the events which followed resulting in the loss of the second original slide when posted to the USA, and the reactions caused by the first. It all seemed to be par for the course. Dramatic new photography obtained at Ness invariably produces a fierce backwash of opinion, claims and counter-claims, explanations and denigrations and a polarisation of views.

Later Doc sent me the original No 1 colour slide, and asked me to take care of it for him. I examined it microscopically, and found in it detail of profound interest to me as a photographer, pragmatist, and serious monster researcher, and fieldworker (I have spent some 430 days and nights living on and observing the surface of these lochs from boats and some ten years of shore based long-lens expeditionary work).

3. The next step was for me to ask Anthony Nicol Shiels if he would write an affidavit as to the circumstances of the photography – which he did on 14th November 1977, duly sworn out and witnessed under the provision of the Statutory Declarations Act 1835. [Copy on file with FT-Ed.]

4. Armed with this document I made private approaches to Royal Photographic Society of which I have long been member – enquiring whether it might be possible for one

of their scientists to examine the original colour transparency of the No 1 colour picture on High Speed Extrachrome. Within a short period a recent president of the RPS – Dr Vernon G.W. Harrison, a most distinguished photographic expert, examined the original, and wrote me a letter about the study he had made of it, which did not reveal anything to suggest that the picture had been faked. On the contrary, there was some very subtle detail in it which he had discovered when examining the image microscopically. He could not, however, commit himself as to what the image represented. It is necessary to read this letter in toto. [See below-Ed]

5. In December of 1977, I circulated a private and confidential set of notes about the Shiels pictures to those who I felt might be interested, and subsequently in early 1978 a private meeting was held in London, at which his photography, and the short super-8 colour movie sequence of a 'head and neck' obtained from shore at Loch Ness by Peter and Gwen Smith in August 1977, was shown and discussed. This resulted in the better sequence being submitted to the RAF for study – it being felt that with movie film there was a better chance of gaining definitive comment – and also because Dr Harrison's letter had already been written about the Shiels picture.

That is where the matter rests at present.

SOME PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS: Of the various objections, doubts and fears expressed over the Shiels pictures – which in truth are understandable, and in a way desirable, if we are to retain the use of our critical faculties – *several can be explained away quite logically – and others* reconsidered in the light of circumstances; for instance... the excessive illumination of the 'head and neck-like object' seen in the No 1 picture is in fact characteristic of objects seen on water in bright sunlight, where they are directly illuminated, and also indirectly receive a double dose of light reflecting off the water surface at a low angle. This produces an astonishing 'cine light' illumination effect, *recognizable by those few people who observe such objects*, over water, and under these conditions...furthermore, the excessively 'blue' water surface is again a combination of photographic circumstances – the sensitivity of H.S. Extachrome to UV light, the excess of UV light in bright sunlight over water, and reflecting off it produces an imbalance of 'blue' in the photograph...the reflections on the water have nothing to do with "shadows" cast by a sun behind the object – 180 degrees out of position as described by the photographer, who said it was behind him. Reflections are not shadows, for heavens sake, etc. etc.

An enlarged study of a big-as-possible print made from the No 1 picture reveals some astonishing and intricate detail which seems both natural, in one sense (the subtle curves of what appear to be neck muscles, for example) – and unexpected in another (the appearance of what could be eye and nostril features on the head).

All things considered, and this includes the possible alternatives such as models, painting, divers with glove puppets etc., the two Shiels pictures interest me enormously, and of course if they are real pictures, even a child can see they are the best still pictures ever obtained of what must surely be the head and neck of a large unknown animal.

At the same time, as still pictures they are proof of nothing but pictures...that is until further similar stills or movie photography are obtained by independent witnesses, showing similar objects.

Finally, in terms of the ever important human analysis, I place great faith in direct speech – the sort of down to earth comments people make when they are coming under fire. Under these circumstances, people tend to say exactly what they feel – and mean it.

TIM DINSDALE
27 March 1979

DR HARRISON'S LETTER TO DINSDALE

I have examined the photographic transparency stated to have been taken by Mr. A.N. Shiels on Saturday 21 May 1977 from the shore of Loch Ness in the vicinity of Castle Urquhart. This examination has been made through a binocular microscope at all magnifications up to X100. I find the transparency to be quite normal and there is not evidence of double exposure, superimposition of images or handwork with bleach or dye.

The object depicted is certainly not a branch of a tree, a trick of the light or an effect of uneven processing. Under magnification a small reptilian head is seen looking towards a point on the right of the photographer. The lighting comes from behind, and somewhat to the right of the photographer; and the foreshortening of the water shows that the object was photographed from a considerable distance through a long focus lens. The creature has a wide mouth, partly open, and light is reflected strongly from the lower lip, which is presumably wet. There is an indication of two eyes and a stubby nose. The head is attached to a long neck whose girth increases as it approaches the water. The neck is smooth and reflects the light strongly, and it appears to be paler in colour on its lower side. The course of the neck can be traced for some inches below the surface of the water until it is lost to view because of the turbidity of the water. The image of the submerged part is distorted by the surface wavelets of the water, and I find these distortions to be entirely naturalistic. There is even a wavelet that has been reflected back from the left side of the neck and caught the light of the sun.

It is not possible to say from a single still transparency exactly what the photograph represents. The obvious explanation is that the photograph depicts a living creature strongly resembling a Plesiosaurus. However, it could be a hoax. For example, a diver might have made a model of the head and neck and be holding it above the water while he himself was submerged. A third possibility is that the photograph is not of an outdoor scene at all, but is a reduction of an imaginative painting executed by a competent artist. To produce a sufficiently deceptive painting would require skill and a detailed knowledge of the effects of light reflected from, and transmitted through, rippled water; and it is just these effects which I find so impressive in the photograph.

While I feel that the alternative explanations I have suggested are not very plausible, they can only be excluded by a study of any independent evidence that may be available.

VGW HARRISON
3 December 1977

LAST WORDS

Quite apart from the relative merits or demerits of the photos themselves, there are two other factors that mitigate the acceptance of Doc's testimony and photos:

Firstly, Doc has never concealed the fact that he is a well-known Cornish eccentric, showman and magician (both on stage and in belief). He has written books on stage illusions for other magicians. Doc believes that he 'invoked' Nessie just as he 'invoked' Morgawr, the Cornish sea-serpent, by the use of ancient magic and psychic power, with the aid of a world-wide group of psychics who were conducting this specific experiment, and the help of a group of witches, including his daughters, who enacted their summoning ceremonies both in secret and in a well-publicised "sky-clad" swim off Mawnan Beach in the Helford Estuary (see FT16, and Doc's article in FT27). In his letters to us over many years Doc has shown himself to be widely read, extremely intelligent, refreshingly honest about every aspect and stage of his endeavours and experiments, and deeply interested in the relationship between Fortean phenomena, surrealism and magical belief. He will readily acknowledge that much of what he does is a song and dance, but points out that not only does humour have a purifying, protecting and sanity-stabilising effect, but there are strong correspondences between things and forces and the images of them. In his writings he shows a sound grasp of Fortean philosophy, and knows that his eccentricities will influence the credibility of his evidence. Nevertheless, he has pleaded for the impartial examination of that evidence.

Secondly, Doc seems to have defied the laws of probability according to those who value such things. There are people who spend much time and money, visiting Loch Ness or wherever every year in the hope of seeing something and each year leaving disappointed. But prior to the May 1977 photographing of Nessie, Doc had seen Morgawr (Cornish for 'sea giant') twice in the Helford Estuary. The second time, he was accompanied by David Clarke, editor of *Cornish Life;* they both took photographs, but Clarke's camera jammed giving a triple exposure (see FTs 19-23).

If this was a run of luck, Doc has not benefited from it much. In fact he firmly believes that this series of incidents has somehow "backfired" and made his family the focus of accidents and misfortune. So much so that Doc has asked us to announce his 'retirement'. In a letter dated early April, he writes: "Within the next few weeks I'm getting out of the psychic game. My witch-daughters are retiring from the monster-raising business too. As a final fling, Kate and I will have a last crack at Owlman (see FT27 – Ed.) and Morgawr... so we can say our farewells to them. I want to get on with other things, like painting and writing...we're all fed up with the 'backlash effect' of too much psychic gameplaying. Its caused some misery in the last few years. We – Kate and I – would like you to announce that we're no longer playing witch and wizard after May 1st. I may give up busking too, for a while. BUT... please don't think I'm turning respectable! Perish the thought...I know that some of our supporters would prefer me to be less 'odd', but as I've said before, that would be dishonest."

I feel sure we haven't heard the last of Doc, or his photographs.

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RKP

Now, if we're sitting comfortably, I'd like to welcome you one and all to the utter depths of filth, degradation and depravity, for this column – those of nervous disposition and/or a tendency to lose control of their bodily functions are advised to beat it smartish – is devoted to a vile and pernicious canker: rock music, with special and peculiar reference to science-fictional, or even (if we're lucky) Fortean content and things that go bump in your tweeters. May I therefore, then, extend cordial and slime-pickled thanks to your courageous editor for allowing something so low on the evolutionary scale as (shriek!) a rock critic access to these pages; may he remain free of ulcers or coronary thrombosis on my account...

Of course, I always thought rock'n'roll (as we australopithicenae are prone to refer to it) was about wholesome, lighthearted activities like sex and drugs and cruising freeways in decomposing Studebakers and love and a spot of how's-your-father in the backseat and, well, sex and probably more sex as well, but even my parents suspected different; they knew it was all a germ-warfare pinko plot to enslave the pointed little minds of Western youth. How right they were. Myself I haven't voted since I discovered the stuff and am now sufficiently steeped in this dangerous substance to actively shun the attentions of Young Conservatives and church outings to *No Sex Please, We're British.*

But, y'know, this all came as a total revelation to me, and I am therefore much indebted to the demented Mrs Leuken[1] and her jovial 'Faithful and True Roman Catholics' for certain information on the matter contained in one of her public service diatribes; "Your children are bringing demons into your homes... called 'rock', 'hard rock' – they were produced in the temple of Satan (sic)... You do not understand, my children, but many of your... recording companies are under the control of Wicca, the international organisation of witches and warlocks. Do not laugh! It is true!" O c'mon, dear Mrs Leuken, not one infinitely weeny titter? No, don't mock, because – leaving aside the fact that may have occurred to the more perceptive among you, that Mrs L. can't point to so much as one gold chalice inscribed with festive qabbalistic symbols, presented by said companies for enslavement of one million souls – there's a terrifying inference here and it boils down (Heh, heh, bubble, bubble...) to this: if your old lady has a scar on her left wrist, under her left (blush) breast or is given to leaping out the window clad in nowt but foul-reeking ointment, she's not only a witch but (shriek!) a *record executive.* Do not laugh! It is true! And since my present in-house ladyfriend is quite partial to a spot of Todd Rundgren or Dwight Twilley on occasion, I can only conclude that I should henceforth ensure that my coffee doesn't bubble or squeak before imbibing.

Not that Mrs Leuken is alone in her cute, acute observations, oh no. Not only do I seem to recall the same feeble-cranial tirades emanating over the years from a rancid rag called, inspirationally enough, *The Plain Truth,* but I have in my possession (if it hasn't spontaneously combusted, that is) an amusing little document headed *The Illuminati*[2] (obviously a punk band) by one Dr Charles C Younts, BR.ED., B.TH., DD., Pastor to the Calvary Baptist Tabernacle, Professor to the Toledo Bible College and meal ticket to his analyst, in which we learn that John Todd[3] is behind all this. And who's behind *is* John Todd, anyway?

Well, it appears that Todd, Ohio's entry in this year's Aleister Crowley Lookalike Contest, is "Manager of Zodiac Prods., the largest Rock Concert Booking Agency in the world", even, and "Zodiac Productions features (sic) the Beatles who took their name from Scarab of Egypt". I don't suppose it'll do much good to cough politely and shuffle-footedly proffer the information that not only don't Zodiac Productions exist, but the Beatles haven't made any records (hellish or otherwise) together for ten years, and those they've produced apart aren't worth an incubus's fart, now, would it? What label are Scarab of Egypt on, anyway?

Let's dig deeper into the goo. It also appears that Three Dog Night are in a coven in Arizona (probably 'cause nobody else would have them) and Santana are in a coven in South America, which is peculiar, because Devadip Carlos Santana – he of the antiseptic white suit and consecrated guitar – is prone to cut albums of such luminous, God-glorifying, devotional intensity that no critic worth his earring will touch one with a ten-foot, incense-flavoured taper. And hot on the heels of this little bauble, as if to clinch the whole soggy deal, we are regaled with the intelligence that Crosby of Crosby, Stills, Nash, Freud and Jung, is "almost dead from a $200 a day heroin habit". Startling news, since said Crosby is currently bouncing with ruddy health, weighs in at about fifteen stone and closely resembles the Beach Ball from the 'Dark Star' movie with a walrus moustache. Furthermore, it does occur to your brainwiped scribe that Neil Young, of that illustrious combo, was so horrified and shaken by the twin deaths of his friends Danny Whitten and Bruce Berry from hitting the needle that he toured (with Crazy Horse) with a show that totally alienated his audience, in which he sang harrowing, sickly little songs like 'Tired Eyes', 'The Needle and the Damage Done', and 'Tonight's the Night' in a shaky, lost voice while a single lightbulb burned over the stage, the whole purpose of which was to scare potential hard-drug users witless. The resulting semi-live album, *Tonight's the Night* lost him about eight zillion sales units as a consequence, and he's shown no signs as yet of having been programmed or otherwise zapped by Mr Todd. Like someone once said; everything you know is wrong. Including that.

Wait, there's more. It seems that nobody can make a record without first proving their Occult connections, the mandatory mutilated left wrist, see? Now, in order to check out this rivetting snippet, I chanced to peer rudely at the left wrist of the last recording musician I chanced across – in point of fact it was Ashley Hutchings of the Excellent Albion Band, whose records I commend to you, and he's made simply scads of the little buggers, believe me – and by this

serious study (I really *did* look, y'know) ascertained this either to be a palpable untruth or Ashley is a genius with body makeup. But, of course, I'm in the music biz myself and you shouldn't believe me; rock journalists are world-renowned for making things disappear instantaneously in a puff of ozone, particularly drink, food, drugs, women and advance pressings of records.

And then Dr Younts hits paydirt: "The rock group Kiss were ordered to form. Kiss means *King in Satanic Service".* Furthermore, we learn, their music comes from demons and is bespoke to enslave the susceptible and three of them are fairies, too. Well, I dunno about the last bit but I'm damn sure that their sex organs in no way resemble yours. Or even mine, perhaps. But there's a bit of twisted-ass truth in here somewhere.

Kiss, in point of fact, are a loathsome aggregation who do sell millions of elpees (as we pseuds call them) in the US by the simple expedient of dressing up in cretinous, studded-leather, lizard jumpsuits, cavorting from one lunatic pose to another and playing music (?) of such assinine ineptitude that only a teenager or a person with tin ears would get off on it. As if that didn't threaten my security enough, they also peddle a nasty concept called the 'Kiss Army', borrow the lightining-flash SS symbol of Third Reich fame (one of the great hits of the forties) and seem to get photographed drooling over the shoulder of everyone from Jimmy Carter to Johnny Cash. Oh yes, they're never seen without their greasepaint either.

Personally, I think they're the goods, the real McCoy. Kiss don't possess the intellect of an enchanted, inebriated toad (three-legged or otherwise) yet they probably could, right now, mobilise a zomboid, rabid mob large enough to overrun the White House, the Pentagon, Wembley Stadium or any other major centre of occult practices. Dr Younts doesn't need the Illuminati; one look at the word 'Kiss' and I said twelve Hail Marys and jumped out the windown.

Next time I'll probably (if I'm allowed to live after this) be revealing how the state of Tennessee is full of musician descendants of the lost Sumerian tribe of Banjo. Perhaps.

Oh, a last quote from Dr Younts: "Christian Rock is also satanic". Mr Rock , are you gonna take that lying down? Call your lawyer. Now!

NOTES

1) For Veronica Leuken's visions of the Virgin Mary at Bayside and Flushing, NY, see 'Visions' last issue – FT28p3-5.
2) A duplicated pamphlet published by the Society of Jesus Christ, Box 6919, Toledo, Ohio 43613, USA. (FT received a copy through the good offices of Dave Fideler's Michigan Anomaly Research outfit, who was sent it by Sig Humanski, an FT reader and teacher in Toledo. Sig was presented it by one of his students who in turn received it from his father. True!—Ed.)
3) See the piece on John Todd's bizarre involvement in FT26p52.

Steve Burgess is an editor of Dark Star magazine.

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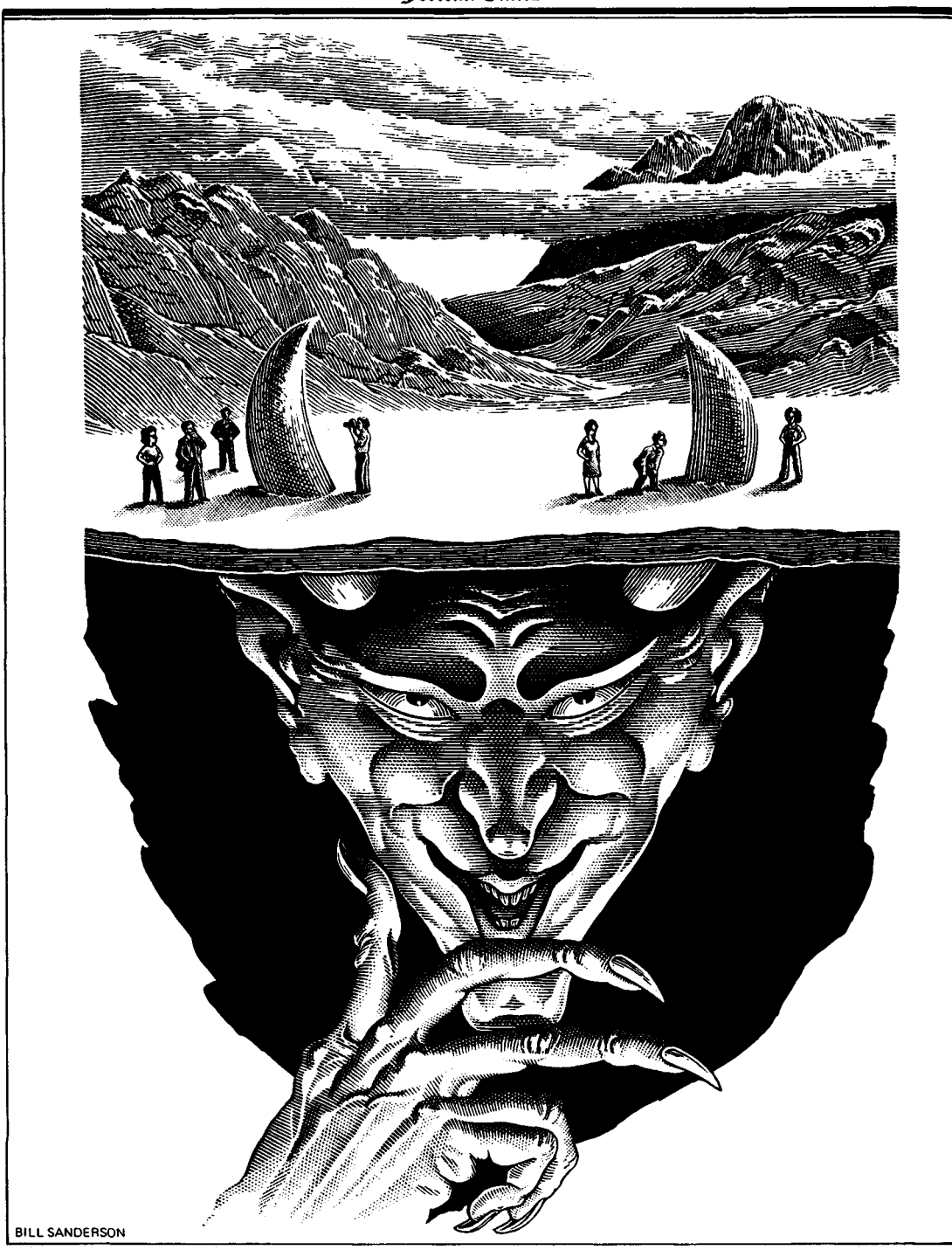


BILL SANDERSON

Devil Names and Fortean Places

Many Fortean researchers have noted the high correlation between names of places and the strange events that happen in their vicinities. Often it is the Devil who gets the blame for the weird, and here leading American researcher Loren Coleman, author of numerous Fortean articles and co-author of THE UNIDENTIFIED, 1975, and CREATURES OF THE OUTER EDGE, 1978, enlarges on the theme.

When Western Europeans landed in the New World, and started spreading across what was later to become America, they discovered what the Amerindians already knew; there were some strange places in this new land. Certain locations were "strange" because the early explorers and settlers would see, hear, smell or feel strange things – e.g., weird globs of light, eerie screechings, sickening sweet odours, cold drafts of air as well as UFOs, mystery animals and other "inexplicables." [See David Fideler's companion article for a Fortean's idea of just what these "certain locations", these "gateways" are all about, beginning next issue – Ed.] The interface between these newcomers and the decidedly unexplainable phenomena produced place-names which attempted to reflect the notion that the locales were special, different and indeed, strange. The names can take many forms, but I have long noticed an American historical acknowledgement of Forteana-ridden places by way of the use of the word "devil" in the naming of these localities. A few examples will illustrate this point:

A) Some of the more frequent sightings of California's phantom black panthers occur in the Diablo (Spanish for "devil") Valley, east of San Francisco. The Las Trampas Regional Park booklet notes the black cat is referred to as "The Black Mountain Lion of Devil's Hole", because it is frequently seen on the slopes of Mt. Diablo, and in the Devil's Hole area of the park. Mystery lights also turn up in the Mt. Diablo – Diablo Valley area frequently. [1]

In 1873, a live frog was found in a slab of limestone in a mine on Mt. Diablo, and in 1806, Spanish General Vallejo encountered a man-like apparition (which had exotic plumage and made "diving movements") while battling the Bolgones Indians. [2] Monte de Diablo is a very strange place.

B) The territory known as Devil's Kitchen in southern Illinois was avoided by the region's Amerindians because of their awareness of its sinister nature. Southern Illinois, in general, is a frequent host of mystery animals and UFOs [3,4] as well as the site of pre-Columbian stone walls which form a rough alignment between the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. [5]

Near Grand Tower, also in southern Illinois, is a small rocky hill known as the Devil's Bake Oven. South of that prominence is a longer hill known as the Devil's Backbone. Speaking of the Devils Bake Oven, folklorist John W. Allen observes: "On those nights when the hill was flooded with gentle moonlight, visitors would report that they had seen a weird and mistlike creature . . . floating silently across their pathway to disappear among the rocks or in the dense bushes on the hillside. This disappearance was often followed by moans, wails and shrieks such as only a ghost can make". [6]

C) Devil's Lake of Wisconsin has its share of geological oddities such as glacier scratches on unusual rock formations and petrified sand waves of an ancient sea [7], but it is the Amerindian mounds which are especially interesting. Three major effigy mounds are located in Devil's Lake State Park. "One in the shape of a bear and another which resembles a lynx are at the north end of the lake. A bird-shaped mound is at the south end". [8] Did the mound-builders wish to acknowledge real animals or phantom creature forms which haunted the shores of Devil's Lake?

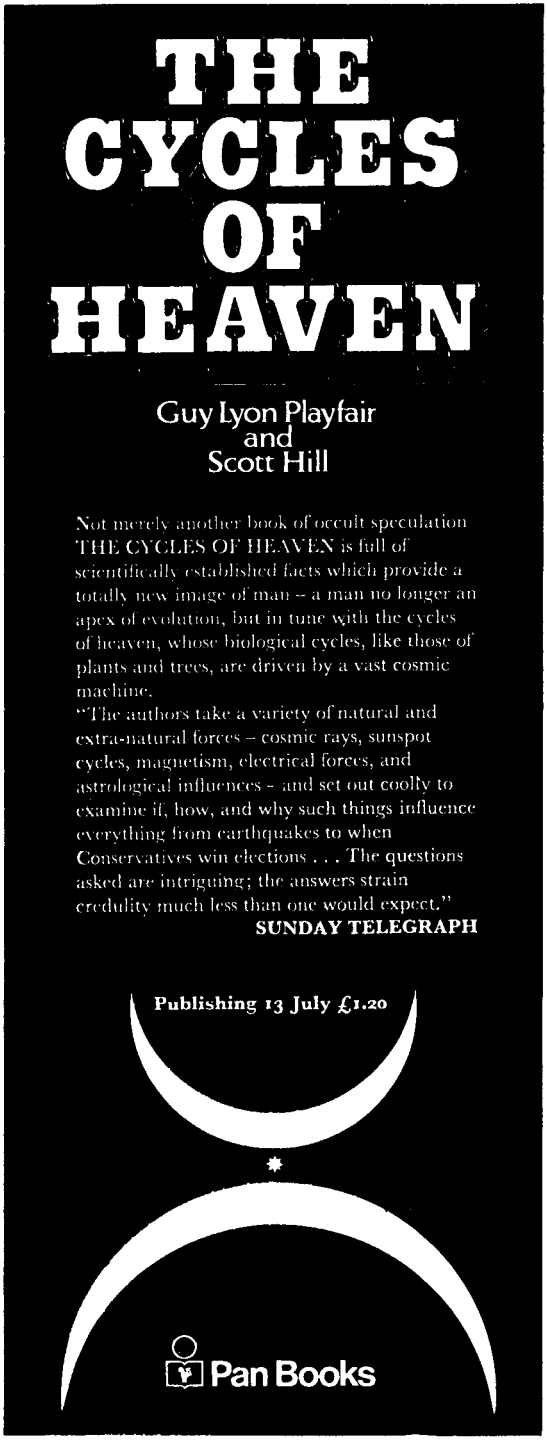
From nearby Baraboo (a mere three miles north of Devil's Lake on Wisconsin 123!), at least a decade ago, there were stories circulating of giant ghost elephants. Or were they mastodons? [9] And finally, August Derleth, author and follower of H.P. Lovecraft, liked this area of south-central Wisconsin because he felt it contains "Cthulhu power zones". [10]

D) One of my favorite examples of the reflection of Fortean phenomena via a "devil name" comes from one corner of the inland town of Chester, New Hampshire, on Rattlesnake Hill. A cavern there of "great notoriety in all the country round" bears the name of Devil's Den. According to local legends, the path leading to the cave "was always kept open, in summer and in winter, by the passing to and fro of evil spirits who frequented the place, though themselves invisible to the eyes of mortal men." [11]

The poet J.G. Whittier put the Devil's Den traditions into verse, and the following two stanzas from that poem give deep insight into bedevilled places, in general:

"Tis said that this cave is an evil place –
The chosen haunt of the fallen race –
That the midnight traveller oft hath seen
A red flame tremble its jaws between,
And lighten and quiver the boughs among,
Like the fiery play of a serpent's tongue;
That sounds of fear from its chambers swell –
The ghostly gibber, – the fiendish yell;
That bodiless hands at its entrance wave, –
And hence they have named it The Demon's Cave.

Yet is there something to fancy dear
In this silent cave and its lingering fear, –
Something which tells of another age,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Of the wizard's wand, and the Sybil's page,
Of the fairy ring and the haunted glen,
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The dreams of childhood remembered long;
And I love even now to list the tale
Of the Demon's Cave, and its haunted vale. [12]

Simply stated, the strange events of the past are often remembered in the geographical names of the area. Place-names can be a Fortean's clue to the "haunted vale". I know of over one hundred and twenty-five places with "devil names" in the United States, and I am finding more correlations with this list and Forteana every day. I suspect many more etymological connections exist. My list of "devil names" is just the tip of the pitchfork.

Indeed, the United Kingdom abounds with fertile devil sites for the curious researcher. Evan Hadingham in *Circles and Standing Stones* writes: "There are countless names and stories connecting ancient sites with giants and devils, such as the Devil's Arrows alignments at Boroughbridge, Yorkshire, or the name Devil's Quoits associated with Stanton Drew." [13]

Geographical "devil names" worldwide may indicate, as they seem to in America, locales high in Fortean energy and strangeness. These places deserve some extra attention, for from the stray sod to the fairy ring, and the haunted glen to the Devil's Den, there lies many a riddle to unfold.

Loren Coleman

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continued from p25

nant. "In fact the whole kampung knew," she added. But the doctor told Ramlah that she would have to be operated on, and she became scared and kept away from him.

So far so good. On 17 February 1978, she went into labour, at her home. Her husband, Hamzah bin Abbas, was at home too, but there is no mention of him witnessing what followed... indeed, he is hardly mentioned at all, neither confirming or denying his wife's story, which runs as follows:

"After having the pain for more than an hour I became dizzy and just then I saw a woman dressed in white. The woman circled around me three times and took something out of a basket and choked by throat (sic; we do not know if the 'something' was choked by the throat, or whether it was Ramlah's throat that was choked. But on with the story...) Then I felt relieved and saw only the navel and feet of my baby. I felt cold kisses on my cheek and saw the woman taking away the baby. I pleaded with her not to do so but she left the house and disappeared".

The ghostly woman, also said to be wearing a yellow shawl, was not seen by anyone else, though Cik (Mrs) Salasiah, a padi planter, came to the house and saw Ramlah in labour. But she did not see the baby being delivered, or any blood. However, she thought she heard someone leaving the house when Ramlah felt no more pain. On the following night, the baby was apparently brought back for Ramlah to breast-feed, but then presumably taken away again. And there, too, our story runs out, alas... *New Straits Times* (Malaysia) 19 February, 1978.

Credit: Garry Abbott, J P Kain, D Tame, Ion Will. SM

Recent issues of FT have seen torrents of data on falls of ice-chunks slime, spiders' webs, nuts, clods of grass, stones and money... and there seems no end to these events. They still happen. We hadn't heard the good old 'Sahara sand' explanation for quite a while, so this time we'll have a few sand falls.

MUD IN YOUR EYE

In mid-February a "yellow snow" fell on part of Vienna – about a week later reports from Poland and Yugoslavia, facing their worst winter in years, also reported a blanket of yellow snow. In Poland, it was said, examination disclosed that a layer of sand had fallen on the snow discolouring it. Vienna's meteorological institute claimed a solution: this gaudy grit had been sucked up by whirlwinds in the Sahara, swept across Europe "by a fast upward air-stream" to come down with the snow in Northern Europe. Satisfying as this theory may be to tiny meteorological minds, one has to boggle at the notion of such quantities of sand i) keeping together in the air; and ii) not decorating the intervening countries on the way! *Sunday Express* 18 Feb 1979; *Daily Telegraph* 24 Feb 1979; *Guardian* 26 Feb 1979.

In 1976 the Swedish National Science Council set up a Sahara dust study group, with international scientists. A Swedish geographer, Prof Anders Rapp, said the precise processes of dust formation and transport are "poorly understood", but notes significantly that the famous dust storms are not made up of sand – sand tends to be blown *along* the desert, not upwards – but topsoil is disappearing at an alarming rate. Writing in the *Sunday Times* 4 Sept 1977, John Worrall said that there was "little evidence of Sahara or Sahel dust moving southwards; the main movement is westwards across or into the Atlantic, "though he does acknowledge that there have been identifications (or alleged identifications) of Sahara sand from Israel to Scandinavia, as well as the Cape Verde Islands, Bermuda, Bahamas and the West Indies. As regards the westward erosion, atmospheric sampling by aircraft suggest the movement of a staggering 40-60 million tons of dust a year across or into the Atlantic.

Westward. 1977 seemed a year for wet sandstorms. 3 March – red dust found on top of fresh snow in the Minneapolis-St Paul area of Minnesota. The local US Weather Bureau, who haven't yet heard of the Sahara get-out, blamed a dust-storm over a drought area in the south-west. *Independent* (Marshall, Minn) 4 March 1977. I don't know if there was a dust-storm then in the south-west US, but coincidentally (whatever that means) a few days later, over the weekend 5-6 March, a "red rain" fell over parts of West Scotland. The Scottish weathermen are *à la mode* – Sahara blamed. *Daily Telegraph* 8 March 1977; Wolverhampton *Express & Star* 8 March 1977. End of March – a "fine yellow dust" settling on Japan. I suppose if you keep going west from the Sahara, you'd reach any part of the East! This time we're back among the backward: droughts in north-east China are blamed. *Daily Telegraph* 30 March 1977. 20 June (I think) – a rain of dust, said to be Sahara sand, fell on Nuremberg, West Germany, for 2 hours. *Reveille* 24 June 1977. 13 August – during the night yellow dust coats the trees, houses and cars of Springwell Estate, Sunderland, Co Durham. A novelty...local officials are at a loss to explain! Sunderland *Echo* 18 Aug 1977. Late Dec – during fierce wind and rain damage bad enough to have a state of emergency declared in one Californian county, northern parts of the state were treated to a celestial facepack as rain reportedly fell through a dust cloud created by 100mph winds. *Daily Telegraph* 23 Dec 1977.

I can be as discriminating as our selective whirlwinds. I separate out 2 accounts of yellow rains from the jaundiced jactitations of 1977, because not Sahara sand is blamed, but a veritable blizzard of bee dung. Over the last 3 weeks of June 1977, yellow spots kept appearing on cars, patios, roofs etc of Des Moines, Washington. It was bee-dung said the Puget Sound Air Pollution Control Agency. It was moth-

dung said professor of zoology, John Edwards, University of Washington. Interestingly, mention is made of an airborne malaise that began in the Seattle area in April 1954 – an oily ash that ate holes into windscreens – spreading to California, Oregon, Ohio and Illinois. *Constitution* (Atlanta, Georgia) 30 June 1977; *New Castle News* (Pennysylvania) 6 July 1977. Mysterious yellow rains repeatedly fell on the Cameron Highlands of Malaysia, drying to a powder. The exudations of insects was mooted, but others pointed out that the falls were reported over a huge area. Regretfully no other details available. *New Straits Times* (Malaysia) 7 July 1977 (or 7.7.77, for number freaks).

We have a few other unrecorded dust falls. On the 1st July 1968, a fine powder the texture of womens' face-powder fell on many parts of southern England and Wales. Dust coloured white, yellow and orange-red were reported, and rains of yellow and pink. At Cardiff there was both a layer of red dust and red hailstones up to 7cm diameter, about tennis-ball size if you've no ruler handy. Exceptionally high temperatures over Spain were blamed for keeping Sahara sand aloft after storms in North Africa – pretty hypothetical as usual. *Leicester Mercury* 1 July 1968. Ron Dobbins sends us a datum not in Fort's *Books* – that on 13 & 14 Feb 1870 showers of fine reddish sand fell in parts of Italy with the rain. Nothing changes much – Sahara sand blamed. *Eclectic Magazine* June 1870, 74: 766.

On 29 January 1979, residents of Hoboken, Belgium, awoke to find a carpet of black snow. Police said they had no explanation, and a local anti-pollution group made the most of the opportunity to 'investigate' the Overpelt lead works in the town. If the factory was the culprit why hadn't it happened there before? *Melbourne Sun* (Australia) 30 Jan 1979.

From the Guillotiere district of Lyon, Belgium, we learn that sometime early in February 1979 (unfortunately no date is given), locals found spots and stains covering stationary cars and the fruit and vegetables of the market-gardens at Place Jean-Mace. A light shower of blue water had left indelible marks everywhere. The reporter in *La Lanterne* (Belgium) 12 Feb 1979, theorizes about particles of paint in suspension in the atmosphere, brought down by the rain. If so, how the particles were accounted for is omitted.

An interesting detail : just prior to the blue rain, residents noticed strong gas-like smells of unknown origin lingering all over the area.

More recently a strange orange rain fell on the Crimean city of Yalta, leaving a layer of thick rust-coloured dust when it dried. Soviet newspapers quoted their scientists blaming it on airborne dust from Turkey. This proves nothing except the sameness of scientists everywhere. *International Herald Tribune* 24 April 1979.

FISHING LINES AND SEEDS

Automotive plant worker, John Wright, saw something snagged on a bush behind his Greensburg, Ohio, home – it was a fishing line. He pulled it off the bush but it seemed to have no end, trailing off into the sky. With the help of neighbours he pulled in about 1000 feet of line, filling 8 reels, with no sign of a kite or whatever to account for its continuing presence in the sky. It broke and floated away, with people following it until it was lost sight of in the sky. Perhaps it was Charlie, sitting on the edge of his Super Sargasso Sea, toying with us. After all he did write: "I think we're fished for." Story from *Post-Dispatch* (St Louis, Missouri) 24 Sept 1978.

Pensioner Rowland Moody, of South Mill Rd., Southampton, claims that in different days various kinds of seeds came down with the snow into his garden – maize, dried peas, mustard and cress and broad beans. He called in the police in case he was the victim of a, uh, vegetable plot. He believes the first rain of mustard and cress seeds was genuine, and that as news got out local wags began playing tricks on him. Mystery unsolved. A Sunday night 'consumer' show on BBC TV, had a few laffs at this story's expense – but I suppose I'm more amazed that something Fortean got airtime. A new sensation – we're becoming respectable! *Daily Mirror* 19 Feb 1979.

When we spoke to Mr Rowland, who remembers the 1968 sand-fall, he readily gave us more details. The falls began on 12 Feb, occurring intermittently over the next few days. He was in his conservatory potting seeds, and outside it was snowing from the East with strong gusts of wind. He heard the seeds hit the house, cascading onto the roof, falling into his garden and the neighbouring gardens each side. The first fall was of cress seeds. They were cylindrical and coated in a jelly which glued them to fingers, shoes and other surfaces. Mr Rowland insisted he was not exaggerating when he said "millions" came down – he estimated about 500 in any 6 inch square. With the recent thaw and rain the little devils are sprouting everywhere (doormat, cracks in paving, flowerbeds, etc); now an inch high and tasting like normal cress. The second fall was of mustard seeds, tiny spheres with a distinctive smell, also in great quantities. Although he regrets not going upstairs to see these falls, he says that the neighbour's boy, 13, saw one fall, teeming down from a small black cloud! The maize, beans and peas seemed different to the observed falls, in that these seeds were *dried* and just appeared on the ground. Mr Rowland suspects a prank by local boys, since the mysterious appearances stopped as soon as the police were notified. Mr Rowland called the press, hoping to get some university or government scientists to investigate, and he's disappointed nothing came of that. Several weathermen he spoke to acknowledge the phenomena of falling materials and animals, but would not mention it publicly. The usual explanation for such falls is – a whirlwind. But where would such quantities of different seeds lie around waiting to be snatched into the sky? Mr Rowland couldn't tell if any vegetation and debris came down with the seeds – at least none was noticeable. He still has some seeds – if any of our readers could properly identify them, please contact us as soon as possible. Here's a good opportunity for a thorough study.

Finally, a conjectured fall. On the back doorstep of a house in Lyndhurst Avenue, Grimsby, a medallion dated 1923-24 was found after recent snow had melted. It had not been there before the snow. Praps it teleported? Scunthorpe *Evening Telegraph* 24 Feb 1979.

Credit: Frank Adey, Janet Bord; Ron Dobbins, Mark A Hall, Valerie Martin, Paul Pinn, Paul Screeton, Thoth, Henri Premont. Has Thomas. RG Twine, Nigel Watson, Ion Will, Will Zeiser.
RJMR

Of all the phenomena with which we deal, perhaps the most common is that of poltergeists and ghosts, from simple apparitions to furniture hurling furies, overlapping with nearly every other category of phenomena. Here we present a few poltergeists who play with fire.

ETHEREAL ARSONISTS

Returning to our own shores, we have a tale of the Blagdon Inn, Paignton, Devon, and the ghost of John Henry, who lived in the pub a hundred years ago, and committed suicide. At least, he's the one who's blamed for strange noises in the night and smashing bottles. Unfortunately, 'John Henry' rather lost his temper after a New Year party in 1978; Landlord Ian Emslie had hired a local comic to raise a laugh at the party. The comic's theme was funny phantoms... and perhaps it's coincidence, and perhaps John Henry was annoyed... but the pub burned down that evening, soon after the guests had left. Emslie blamed the ghost, and I suppose a man who's just sustained £30,000 worth of damage to his pub has the right to blame whoever he chooses! *Daily Mirror* 4 January 1978.

And another tale of revenge: John Ingham, 43, his wife Dylys, 40, and their daughter Lorraine, 18, had lived quite peacably in their 400-year old cottage for some time. Then Mr Ingham, a construction company manager, decided to renovate the cottage, which stands in the Isle of Sheppey, Kent. Beneath the floorboards he discovered a rough wooden effigy, about a foot tall; a man with his hands by his side, and seemingly wearing some sort of monk's habit. Mr Ingham "knew it was evil", wouldn't let anyone else touch it, and burned it immediately. Perhaps that was a mistake...

Shortly afterwards, Mrs Ingham began to have forebodings. The sideboard would shake, the windows rattle, and their Christmas tree was thrown over as they watched. They never saw the ghost, but Mrs Ingham would hear a child giggling and calling her name. She tried talking to the voice, and it told her its initials were M.S. and that he had curly ginger hair. But when asked to leave, he merely giggled. Events centred on the study, where the effigy was found. Daughter Lorraine refused to stay in the house on her own after hearing the voice one night. When her parents returned home she was hysterical, not daring to go into the study in case 'it' grabbed her.

Mr Ingham became a changed man too. He and his wife began to have violent rows for the first time in 23 years of marriage, and eventually he walked out and stayed with a friend for two months. And while he was away, a fire started: as his wife was sleeping under heavy sedation upstairs, a blaze began in the study, apparently at the spot where the effigy had been found. A passing coalman saw the fire and rescued Mrs Ingham, but police and firemen could find no logical cause for the fire. After that, Mr Ingham 'came to his senses' and returned home, since when the disturbances have subsided somewhat.

Checking in the Kent County Council archives, they found that a family called Sole lived in the same street 200 years previously, and that they had a 10-year old son who drowned; but they could not find his initial. Nonetheless, they decided he was probably the one responsible, and a spiritualist that visited the house confirmed their view. A convenient conclusion, but we can only wonder what connection there might have been between an apparently ritualistic effigy and a 10-year old boy who didn't even live in the same house...*News of the World* 15 January 1978.

And still the fiery furies rampage through the world. They seem to have a liking for throwing stones, too, and that is how our next tale begins. Ex-boxer Lazarus "Tucks" Pochaka and his then-pregnant wife, Annacleto, lived in the Orlando East area of Soweto, South Africa. On 10th May 1978, a stone was hurled through the bedroom window, and Mrs Pochaka was slapped and throttled by the 'creature'. In the next few days, curtains began to catch fire, and the furniture was wrecked and burned too. Mr Pochaka's shoes and socks began to cavort through the air, and a shoe hit him on the thigh. On Sunday the 15th, a church service was held in the house, in an attempt to discourage the poltergeist. Nonetheless, on the Monday there was the usual pitiful sight: burned and wrecked furniture dumped in the yard, most of the windows broken, and Mrs Pochaka scared to go into the house.

However, on Tuesday an unnamed official from the West Rand Administration Board turned up and "explained" everything: it was all an electrical fault, he said... nothing but a short-circuit. The Pochakas didn't believe him. They organised another prayer-meeting for the same night, during which a bag of salt was hurled from the kitchen into the dining room, which is where the group were praying. Perhaps the ghost was trying to exorcise the exorcists, but unfortunately we have no more details of how this confrontation worked out. *Rand Daily Mail* (South Africa) 16 & 17 May 1978.

And lastly, the ghost of a fire itself. The story comes from the little village of Bepton, near Midhurst, Sussex, and was recorded from the witness, an elderly villager, in the 1930s. Sherwood's pond, near the Shamrock Inn, used to be a favourite skating rink when it froze over in the old, cold winters, and great bonfires were built to illuminate it for midnight skating. One night, when the villager was walking near the Shamrock Inn, he saw a burst of flame leap across the road, apparently without source. The fire left smoke spreading over the road and into the nearby trees, before that too dissipated in the darkness, leaving all as it was before. The villager was convinced that he had seen some sort of ghost light, and at this late date, we can find no grounds for disagreeing with him. *Midhurst & Petworth Observer* 5 May 1978.

Credit: J Hitchens, Chris Holtzhausen, Colin Mather, Paul Screeton, Nigel Watson. **SM.**

Bram Stoker could hardly have realised the effect he would have on generations to come when he epitomised the archetypal vampire in Count Dracula - for 80 years later his sanguine nobleman still stalks through the popular consciousness with a mighty stride, as witness the recent theatrical versions of DRACULA, and the forthcoming spate of films.

VAMPIRE TALES

Every year, scores of people visit a churchyard in Whitby, Yorkshire, searching for the nonexistent grave of the fictitious vampire – such is the hold of Dracula on the imagination. *Daily Express* 17 April 1978.

But perhaps they are looking in the wrong place, for a very solid slab of granite turned up at Peckham, South London, bearing the words "Count Dracula, 17.12.1847". Workmen found it buried deep in the earth while carrying out renovations to a house in Peckham Hill Street; but a couple of days after the story appeared in the press a former resident, David Perrin, came forward to say that he had buried the stone as a joke, 13 years previously, when he was 15 years old. Mystery solved, but there are some curious aspects too. Site agent James Davis remarked that he had been to the house at night to watch for vandals, and found the place extremely spooky; also that his Doberman Pinscher would not go into the garden. Perhaps next-door neighbour, James Francis, summed it up best, though: "It's eerie. If they find any dead'uns in there, I'm moving out. Let alone undead'uns". London *Evening News*, 15 & 17 August 1978.

And then there are mysterious tales of Dracula's bones; or rather those of Vlad "The Impaler" Tepes, Dracula's historical forerunner. Somewhere along the line they disappeared; or perhaps they were never found. His body was believed to have been buried beneath the floor of Snagov Chapel, on Snagov Island, in a lake near Bucharest, Rumania. But excavation revealed only ox-bones in the alleged grave though the dig, in 1931, did uncover some human bones near the chapel door, in company with jewelry and pieces of silk bearing the Tepes emblem. These bones were taken to the Bucharest Museum, from which they have since "mysteriously" disappeared. *National Examiner* 30 August 1976.

Perhaps Don Blyth has them. He runs a Weird Museum in Hollywood, and one of the main attractions is "Dracula's" corpse. He claims the body disappeared near the end of World War 2, and turned up some years later in a shop in Meza, Arizona. They woudn't say now they got it, but Blyth paid $3,045 for it, and has statements "from various experts" as to its authenticity. Vlad Tepes, as far as we know, had a fairly normal physiognomy...but as you might expect Blyth's "Dracula's corpse" has two large, hooked fangs protruding from the upper jaw. Blyth insists the teeth are genuine: a natural outgrowth from the bone, rather than a clever insertion job. And if that is the case, we'll at least admit he has some very peculiar remains in his possession. But as to whether two missing rib indicate that the body once had a stake thrust into its heart, well... Too good to be true? Up to you...! *National Insider* 17 November 1974.

According to Don Blyth, owner of the Weird Museum of Hollywood, these are the remains of Dracula. Blyth points to the fang-like teeth and the caved-in chest (where a stake might have been driven) as his proof! *National Insider* 17 Nov 1974.

And talking of 'lost and found' in an obvious publicity stunt, Los Angeles producers of the play *Dracula* decided to fly in a box of earth from Rumania, to line the Count's coffin with. But when the box arrived at the airport, the dirt had disappeared. Or so said the producers. *Detroit Free Press* 29 October 1978.

All of which demonstrates in, uh, a jugular vein the evocativeness of the vampire count. But what ghouls we mortals be; there are some who take the subject more seriously...all *too* seriously, alas...

BLOOD SUPPERS

These, then, are the vampires, blood-drinkers and plasma-thieves of the 1970s; a less-than-supernatural lot of obsessives for whom "the blood is the life"...usually life-imprisonment...

Farm labourer Alan Dyche, 20, of Abergele, Denbighshire was somewhat less than discreet when he became interested in black magic. He told people he was a vampire, and took friends along when he was making blood sacrifices to the devil. He killed 6 sheep, 2 lambs, 4 rabbits and a cat, and drank their blood. The law replied in similar style: 5 charges of killing animals, one of burglary, one of theft of rabbits. Dyche got off with three years probation. *Daily Mirror* 26 November 1971.

Our 'vampires' are loose in all parts of the world these days: from New England researchers Ed Warren and his wife Lorraine claimed to have

encountered two local blood-drinkers, both again connected with witchcraft and magic. The first, named simply as "Lilith" (a suggestive name in itself, for in Hebrew myth Lilith was the progenitor of the sexually-vampiric incubae and succubae) told of her encounter with a young man in a cemetery. He tried to kiss her, but she buried her teeth in his neck and held him down with an "unnatural surge of strength" until she had tasted blood. That was the first of many attacks, though she never thought of herself as vampire in the traditional sense, merely "a very evil person who liked the taste of blood. I just liked being evil." However, when one of the coven that she had joined suggested using her own father as a blood sacrifice, she decided to call a halt. The second vampire, Carl Johnson of Rhode Island, developed a "thirst for blood" one night. He crept into the bedroom of his sleeping sister, delicately pricked her leg and sucked her blood. He later started a Satanic coven and claimed that when he sucked his victim's blood he could feel himself getting physically stronger. Both vampires are alleged to have been cured by the Warrens, though how this cure was carried out we are not told. *Sunday People*, 9 June 1974.

From the above, it should already be obvious that there is a strong sexual motivation in our 'vampires'; from here on, it only gets worse...

We mention Zdzislaw Marchwicki merely for the sake of completion, as he was christened 'the vampire of Silesia' by the press. He was arrested in 1974, charged with terrorising the area around Katowice, Poland, between 1964 and 1970. Lying in wait for lone women, he would knock them out with a bludgeon, rape them and kill them with a home-made steel-whip. After a lengthy trial, the 48-year old Pole was found guilty of 15 murders and 6 attempted murders, and sentenced to death. Krzysztof Plewa, 27, also named a 'vampire', was at work in the same area at the same time. He would strangle his victims with a noose, then rape them while they were semi-conscious. He was convicted of 17 attacks, and sentenced to 25 years. *Chronicle* (San Francisco) 30 March 1974; *Evening News* (Reading) 19 September 1974, *Daily Express* 24 July 1975.

Returning to our blood-drinkers, we have 41-year old deaf mute Kuno Hofmann of Nuremberg, W. Germany. He admitted removing the bodies of at least 30 women from their freshly-dug graves at 15 cemeteries in Germany to drink their blood. Hofmann was accused of shooting a sleeping couple in a car, in May 1972, and drinking the blood from their head-wounds; also of a number of mortuary break-ins, and the attempted murder of a mortuary attendant whom he shot when disturbed while looking for bodies. He told the police: "I drank the blood of the women because I wanted to feel it in my body. I need a litre of women's blood every day. I've got used to it now." Brought to trial in August 1974, he refused to answer questions put to him in deaf-and-dumb language, merely staring blankly ahead and occasionally pointing to the public gallery. He had, it seems, spent 19 of the previous 24 years in prisons and mental institutions. *Daily Mirror, Toronto Sun, Omaha World–Herald* (Nebraska) all 6 August 1974.

From Germany again, Hamburg this time, a fine example of a Dracula obsession taken to the limit. The neighbours lived in fear of 24-year old Walter Locke: they heard eerie sounds at night and had to address him as Grand Master or Count Dracula; he ate raw meat, slept during the day and roamed the streets at night. Of course, burly 30-year old electrician Helmut Max knew nothing of this when the tall young man dressed in black came up to him in the street and knocked him unconscious with a karate chop. Helmut woke up in a coffin lined with white silk, in a small candlelit room. Locke, who had a "stabbing, hypnotic look" announced himself as Dracula, and that he lusted for human blood. He then hit Helmut in the face with great force, and collected the blood that flowed in a white enamel bowl. Then he drank it. With seemingly unnatural strength, Locke lifted his victim out of the coffin, and the latter fell at his feet, begging for mercy and swearing to be his slave for life. When Helmut had kissed his feet, Locke accepted his submission, and together they ran through the deserted streets to a cemetary half a mile away. There, while Locke performed 'obscene rites' before an ivy-covered vault, his victim escaped and ran to fetch the police. When he had finally persuaded them to believe him, he led them back to the room where they found Locke asleep in his coffin. Despite all this, doctors did not believe Locke was mad, and he was charged with kidnapping and causing grievous bodily harm. *News of the World* 27 October 1974.

Behaving like an officer and a... gentleman? Ian Officer, 41, had a somewhat obsessive dislike of prostitutes, especially when he was drunk. His fantasy was to murder one, steal her money and drink her blood. And one night in August 1974, he set off for St Anne's Court, Soho (mere yards from our current mailing address!), armed with a sword-stick, knives, whips, a bayonet and a razor, intent on making his dream come true. The girl of his choice managed to stay out of range of his swordstick, while screaming for help, so Officer could only steal £9.60 and flee to the street. Now the tale degenerates into farce, for two policemen had been brought running by the screams, and Officer duly ran into the officers. He lunged at one, who sidestepped and was nearly knocked down by a passing car; as it was he was struck on the arm. The other policeman grabbed a cripple's crutch and beat Officer into submission. He got life-imprisonment, later being transferred to Broadmoor mental hospital. *Daily Express, Daily Mail,* 18 April 1975, *Daily Mirror, Daily Mail* 21 February 1976.

From Indonesia, an astonishing tale; though our astonishment is as much at Indonesian justice as anything else. 25-year old Bahya Lenpeng, living in a village in South Sumatra, had six husbands in two years...and killed five of them. On their wedding night, no less, she would give each new husband a sedative, prick his artery and drink his blood while he slept. After a month of this, the husband, suspecting nothing, would die of anaemia. With husband number six, however, she erred; for he was the local police constable, and he only pretended to drink the drugged tea. When it was her turn for some liquid refreshment, he promptly slapped the cuffs on her and dragged her by the hair to jail. And the verdict? A suspended sentence for manslaughter (!) – and a welcome home from her new husband. *Sunday People* 22 June 1975.

Little Tracey Robson, 9, was walking through a field, Collin's Meadow, with two friends, not far from her home in Canonsbrooke, Harlow, Essex. Suddenly a man wearing a stocking mask leaped

from the bushes and began to chase them. The two friends managed to run away, but Tracey tripped and the man, wearing grey checked trousers and a red pullover, was upon her. He bit her viciously on the cheek, but did nothing else to her; then jumped up and ran off with blood on his lips. As far as we know, he was never found. *Sunday People, Sunday Mirror* 5 October 1975; *Daily Express* 6 October 1975.

Another unpleasant tale: Michael Ireland, 23, knew he was a dangerous man; he was obsessed with the full moon, subject to blackouts, and already had a history of violence, having beaten up his girl-friend, amongst others. He had made attempts to see a psychiatrist, but the hospital cancelled the appointments 3 times. And then it was too late. Susie Giles, 10, laughed at him while he was drunk. He dragged her into a garage, subjected her to violent sexual assault, bit her and tried to suck her blood, hit her 11 times with a brick and then set fire to her body. Next day he met his 54-year old ex-scout master, dragged him into a sewage works, threw him into a silo and pelted him with stones, bricks and lumps of concrete. He was finally cornered on the roof of his girl-friend's flat, where he held out for two hours before jumping. He appeared in court on crutches, pleading guilty to manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility, and causing grievous bodily harm to Mr Bath. *Daily Mirror, Daily Mail, Daily Express,* 27 May 1976.

With relief, we come to a tale without violence; terror, yes, but no bloodshed. In Lauderhill, Florida, a man 6ft 4ins tall with long hair was terrorising school children, at Castle Hill and Paul Turner Elementary schools, Lauderhill Middle School and an (unnamed) high school. He wore a cape and fangs, and ran up to the kids spreading his arms wide; they, in turn, ran home crying. Reports said local officials' "blood was boiling"! *Dallas Morning News,* 20 May 1977.

And in Lubbock, New Mexico, 5 pints of blood were taken to the bus station as an emergency shipment to a hospital in Hobbs. When a man turned up and said he had come to collect it, the clerks handed it to him. Oops... wrong fella! Following a tip-off from an apartment manager, the blood was found in a vacant apartment, untouched, still packed in its freezer container. As to the reason for it all, we can only wonder... *Dallas Times Herald,* 1 November 1977.

Back to the sadists: Robert Smith, 50, continually beat up and degraded his common-law wife Barbara, 46, over a 10-month period, including carving his initials in her back with a razor-blade and drinking her blood. At times Smith, of Wimbledon, South London, would growl like a dog. He got an 18-month suspended sentence. *Sun,* 1 February 1978.

And in Chesterfield, a man of about 20 pinned a girl, also aged 20, against a wall in Calow Lane, Hasland, and bit her neck before running off. *Nottingham Evening Post,* 8 February 1978.

A scare story from Malaysia: Reports that a midwife at a government clinic in Batu Pahat had been sucking blood and eating placenta were striking terror among expectant mothers. The rumour began in January 1978, and went on for at least a month. We suspect the story may have been no more than scaremongering, but women were threatening to boycott the clinic, and pressing the Ministry of Health for investigation. *New Straits Times* 12 February 1978. See this issue's 'Occult Crimes' section for another tale of malevolent Malaysian midwifery.

From Bangladesh, a racket where the suckers are the criminals, not the victims: a well-organised gang extracting blood from sleeping victims to sell to the needy in the port city of Chittagong. One girl, Rahela Khatun, 18, said she woke up to see a stranger standing over her holding a syringe. Before she could cry out, he overpowered her and put her to sleep with chloroform. London *Evening Standard* 3 July 1975.

And back to Germany for our latest report on blood/lust: an unnamed student, 22 years old, was arrested in Frankfurt after a 15-year-old girl went to the police, and charged with causing dangerous bodily injuries, seducing minors and possessing illegal drugs. He is alleged to have seduced a number of girls aged between 12 and 15 with the aid of drugs, and to have then drawn off blood for drinking. A search of his flat revealed large syringes, bottles with traces of human blood, marijuana, cola, leaves, arsenic and four large butchers' knives...the last of which, thankfully, he doesn't seem to have got round to using. When last we heard, he was being held pending further inquiries. *Daily Express, Daily Mirror, Shropshire Star, Pretoria* (S.A.) *News,* 3 January 1979; *Ceylon Daily News,* 4 January 1979.

(See also the letter, this issue, from Michael Hoffman, mentioning hypodermic vampires—Ed)

STAKE-OUTS

And then there's the other side of the coin...where there are some who believe themselves to be vampires, so there are others who see themselves as vampire-hunters. In this so-called enlightened age, there are still those who take the legends literally: that there are corpses that rise from the grave at night, and which must be staked down again to prevent them working evil. We have a couple of recent reports to hand...

St George's Church, Camberwell, London, was the target of raiders in early September 1977, who smashed their way through a wall to gain access to the burial vaults. 12 of the 128 lead-lined coffins in the vault were smashed open, and bones and well-preserved, embalmed corpses from the Victorian era were strewn over the floor. Two corpses were beheaded, another had a wooden stake driven into its chest. Whoever was responsible seems to have gone about things with the fury and organisation of a commando-raid: concrete blocks were smashed aside, coffins ripped open with what looked like "some kind of giant tin-opener". *Sunday People* 4 September 1977.

Perhaps more misguided than obsessed, two boys aged 10 and 13 broke into a grave in a churchyard at Wyke, Bradford, only a month later. They prised off the lid of the coffin, containing a woman buried a year earlier, and poked the shrouded corpse with a stick. Magistrates, handing down conditional discharges, attributed the desecration to too many Dracula films. *Daily Telegraph,* 5 October 1977.

Finally, as we go to press, we learn of the conviction, in Palo Alto, California, of Richard Chase, 28, for the first-degree murder of six people. He confessed to drinking the blood of at least one of his victims. London *Evening Standard* 9 May 1979.

Credit: Gary L Abbott, Tom R Adams, Janet & Colin Bord, Loren Coleman, Gene Duplantier, Lucius Farish, Dave Fideler, Chris J Holtzhausen, Anthony Smith, Joe Swatek, Nigel Watson, Ion Will. SM.

UPSIDE DOWN, DOWN UNDER

One of the more bizarre stories in the annals of ufology began on the evening of Saturday, 21st October, 1978.

Frederick Valentich, a 20-year-old Australian with 150 hours of flying experience, took off in a Cessna 182 aircraft from Moorabbin Airport, on a routine flight to King Island. During this flight he reported to the Melbourne Flight Information service that he could see a long shaped, unidentified aircraft, which was 1000 ft. above his own altitude of 4,500 ft. Minutes later the young pilot radioed that his engine was rough idling and beginning to cough, but he still stated that his intention was to continue towards King Island.

Then at 7.12 p.m. Frederick said in a calm voice; 'that strange aircraft is hovering on top of me again. It...is hovering and it's not an aircraft'. Those were the pilots last words which were followed by a strange metallic sound – like two drink cans being banged together – and then all communication was lost. Most of this material has been reported extensively in the media and so it is not worthwhile to spend time and space in rehashing the full story of the unsuccessful RAAF search for Valentich and his aircraft.

The media immediately jumped to the conclusion that Frederick had been abducted by a UFO, and this idea was reinforced by reports that on the same day, numerous UFO sightings were made in the Melbourne locality. The Victorian UFO Research Society and the Blue Mountains UFO Investigation Bureau, were kept particularly busy investigating these claims.(1,2,3.)

When Frederick hadn't been found – despite an extensive search – the Australian Department of Transport decided that they ought at least to offer some sane explanation for his disappearance – officialdom doesn't like mysteries. So a spokesman advanced the Australian 'up and under' theory, explaining that Frederick; 'wasn't very experienced and could easily have accidentally turned the plane upside down and seen his own lights reflected in the sea'.

Brad Forrest of the Sydney Sun(4) retraced Frederick's flight path and proved to his own satisfaction that the missing pilot had indeed become a victim of disorientation and had thus crashed into the drink – ignoring the fact that he had disappeared in perfect flying conditions and was an instrument-rated pilot with 15 hours experience of night flying(5,6) – the media doesn't like mysteries it can't solve.

A strange twist to the story occurred on Thursday, 26th October, when 16-year-old Miss Rhonda Rushton – Frederick's girl friend for the previous 6 months – turned up at the Bay Pines Motel at Apollo Beach. Miss Rushton asked Mrs Joyce Ford, the motel owner, if she could see Frederick. Later Mrs Ford told reporters: 'When I said there was nobody by that name stopping here she seemed to cry. 'She said she had arranged to meet him at 7 o'clock. She just stood there for several minutes as if she couldn't believe me and didn't want to leave'.(7) This story led hordes of journalists, reporters and photographers to Apollo Bay.

A couple of Frederick's friends also surfaced in Apollo Bay, and they were not too pleased to find that the media suspected a hoax. One of the friends told a reporter: 'If I find out who started this rumour I'll shoot the bastard down like a dog'.(8) These friends felt that Frederick had crashed into the nearby Otway Ranges, and they planned to search for him. Frederick's father, Guido Valentich, an Italian who had migrated to Australia in 1955, said: 'It is outrageous to suggest he is hiding somewhere. I believe he was sucked up into the air by a UFO and then forced back to earth somewhere – perhaps in Central Australia'.(6)

With speculation rife, and with no clue as to his whereabouts, the story was abandoned by the media in Late November, 1978. Like the legendary story of Captain Mantell's tragic encounter with a UFO – which he saw "...directly ahead of me and still moving at about half my speed. The thing looks metallic and of tremendous size,"(9) before he and his aircraft disintagrated over the land of hope and glory – the Valentich case is left to the hacks of ufology to disinter. In the Mantell case a UFO was seen by other witnesses, and the main dispute was whether Mantell had been fooled by a secret Skyhook balloon, or whether he had been zapped by the electro-magnetic field of an extraterrestrial flying saucer.

The Valentich case presents several discrepancies which indicate that Frederick wasn't just an innocent victim of saucer napping or disorientation. These discrepancies can be listed as follows:

a) Frederick only filed a one-way flight plan to King Island, although he had indicated his intention of returning the same evening.(10)
b) He made no arrangements for the landing lights at King Island to be switched on.
c) Police found no one who had arranged to sell crayfish to Frederick – the stated intention for his flight.
d) The aircraft's long range fuel tank was filled to its 303

Airman missing at sea

PILOT SAW A U.F.O.

MELBOURNE: A young pilot flying over Bass Strait near Cape Otway disappeared last Saturday night minutes after reporting a UFO.

In the six minutes before his radio cut out with a metallic noise, the pilot, Frederick Valentich, 20, was able to describe the UFO and its behaviour to Melbourne Flight Service.

© Frederick Valentich

What the pilot said

litre (80 US gallon) capacity.

e) Cape Otway lighthouse keepers and Bass Straight fishermen did not report seeing any light aircraft in the vicinity.[11]

f) Despite ideal radar conditions, at no time was the aircraft plotted on radar.[1,12]

g) There were rumours that Melbourne police received reports of a light aircraft making a mysterious landing not far from Cape Otway, at the same time as Frederick's disappearance.[1]

h) Although Bass Straight — and later Cape Otway and King Island — were searched for signs of wreckage, nothing was found.

i) He had 300 dollars cash on his person.

j) He, arranged to meet Miss Rushton on the same evening at 7.30 p.m. — a date he couldn't have possibly kept.

k) Frederick's father claimed that, 8 or 10 months before his disappearance: 'My son told me he had seen a large, brilliantly-lit object in the western sky which was flying at a tremendous speed from south to north'.[13] His father also stated that Frederick firmly believed in the existence of UFOs. Yet no mention was made of a UFO during his last radio communication.

l) On the tape recording of the last conversation with the young pilot, there is no hint of panic in his voice.

People have tried to explain Frederick's disappearance by suggesting that he was: smuggling drugs, hoaxing everyone, flying upside down, executing a bizarre form of suicide, or was abducted by a UFO. My own theory is that he was on a suicidal acid trip, and whilst enjoying the effects of flying upside down, he was banged between two UFOs (thus creating the reported sound of two beer cans clanging together), as a consequence of this he was atomised into the twilight zone. Any better theories?

DESTINY OR DESIGN?

On the evening of the 9th July, 1968, Gene Ruegg was fiddling with his 5,000 dollar radio-telegraphy equipment, in the bedroom of his home in Memphis, Tennessee. All was normal until he heard the pilot of an aircraft, coded Delta four-zero, who reported over the crackling static: 'I am being attacked by unidentified objects, I think I...'

The transmission died, and then the pilot's voice returned again, saying: 'They're closing in on me. I am unable to steer a course. 'Something is happening to the plane... I am being taken along by this thing. I require assistance. I require assistance...' Gene then heard, 'a strange, searing noise like scraping metal and the pilot shouted something I couldn't identify. Control tried without success to establish contact, but they couldn't, he said. According to Gene, a USAF spokesman confirmed that a Phantom jet had, in July 1968, gone missing in mysterious circumstances from the Southlands, Tennessee, air base.

The US Air Defence Command has possession of Gene's tape recording of the last dramatic minutes of Delta four-zero's communication, but it is 'still being studied and assessed'.[14] Could Frederick Valentich have based his disappearance on this, the Mantell case, and other reports from flying saucer lore?

CAN YOU PICTURE IT?

Aircraft being abducted by UFOs has been a theme employed by the cinema since 1950s. One of the best and earliest films to portray this ufological scenario was Joseph Newman's *This Island Earth* (1955). The plot of this classic SF film develops when the naughty but desperate Metalunans suck a light aircraft up into their gigantic flying saucer...

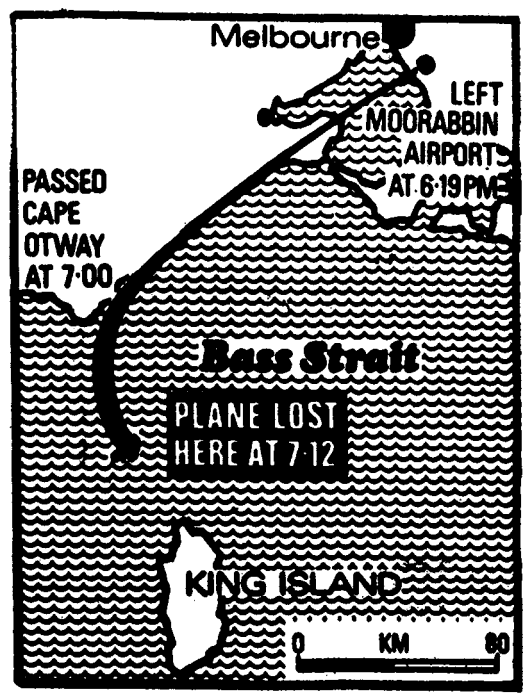
In *Star Trek*'s first season (1966-1967) D.C. Fontana's story, 'Tomorrow is Yesterday', sends the USS Enterprise back into the skies of the 1960s. A USAF jet pilot who is flying in the vicinity photographs the Enterprise which he mistakes for a UFO — silly fellow — and from there the plot cleverly revolves around the abduction of the pilot and the manipulation of time. Even Spielberg in *CE3K* used the factual disappearance of Flight 19 as the foundation for his monumental cinematic faction. (An excellent exposition of the Flight 19 saga has been written by Mr X[15].)

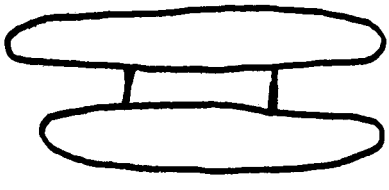
The imaginative fuel supplied by these celluloid marvels only reinforces the view that ufology is a brew of 'faction' (fact and fiction) — the degree to which each influences the other is one hell of a maze.

BODYWORK

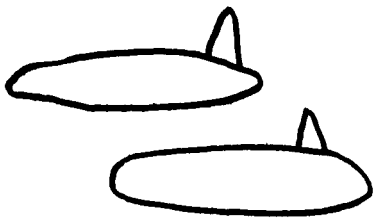
At the first Iberian conference on the subject of UFOs, held in Oporto in October, 1978, a startling revelation was announced by MJ Fernandes at the start of the conference, and repeated at the close of the conference by R

'UFO' PILOT: DID HE FLY INTO THE SEA?





Mark, 14, of Geelong, drew this sketch of the object he saw in the sky during a tennis match on October 21 . . . "It had a color like a sort of metallic silk."



A Geelong woman's sketch of the objects she saw at Cape Otway on October 21 . . . "What puzzled us was that the two objects were flying with such precision."

Sketches of objects seen in Melbourne skies the same day Valentich disappeared. Melbourne *Herald* 25 Nov 1978.

Berenguel.(16,17) Their story was that on the 2nd November, 1959, two UFOs were seen in broad daylight over Southern Portugal. From them fell a cloud of cottony filaments, which rained down on the region for a period of 4 hours.

A Portuguese professor collected one of these cottony filaments, in a test tube. He discovered that it was a 'living organism about 4mm long, equipped with tentacles ending in a 3-pronged fork, and which took up defensive postures'. The living being had a cross-section of 1mm and owned 10 tentacles.

Eventually after 2 years the organism broke up — probably under pressure from sceptics. Soviet scientists were also alleged to have obtained similar specimens, recently.

At the 9th annual MUFON convention, held in Dayton, Ohio, in July 1978, Leonard Stringfield repeated some hot gossip. This consisted of the story about 30 alien bodies — they must be breeding! Previous reports only mention 12 bodies — Wright-Patterson have on ice.(18,19,20). Leonard's sources for these stories come from former government employees. However, in reply, John Williams, the director of Richland College Planetarium, said that: 'I'm inclined to think that's a misinterpretation of possibly true events, including early American rocket experiments that sent monkeys into near space. Perhaps there could have been an accident with one of these and the recovered wreckage of the craft and body could have been misinterpreted as extraterrestrial craft and beings'.(21)

Williams also commented that military intelligence often circulate bizarre stories in order to detect any security leaks. Through the Freedom of Information Act, the Ground Saucer Watch (GSW) group intend continuing to file lawsuits, this time against the National Security Agency. GSW director, William Spaulding, spent $15,000 on suing the CIA who had to cough up 340 documents. If GSW have hopes of finding any alien bodies, I'd advise them to look at Patrick Moore; the only alien body the USA has is a sometime peanut farmer.

In 1977 a couple of police officers were sent to upper Manhattan, at 6.30am, after reports that a disorderly crowd were gathered around an alien spaceship. The policemen found a dozen people surrounding a cone shaped object which was emitting flashing lights and a gurgling sound. Nearby they found a small, dead, humanoid body (another peanut farmer?). The officers took the capsule and body to the 34th Precinct, where they discovered that the body was a GI Joe doll covered in clay, the capsule was a mass of wires and two tape recorders.(22)

Could it have been an elaborate hoax by the aliens? If they were to disguise themselves as dolls, or monkeys, or minute organisms, or Steven Spielberg, or Jimmy Carter — who knows what havoc they could provoke?

NOTES

1) *The Australian* 23 & 24 Oct 1978.
2) *The Australian* 31 Oct 1978.
3) *The Herald* (Melbourne) 25 Nov 1978.
4) *The Sun* (Sydney) 7 Nov 1978.
5) *The Sun* (Sydney) 23 Oct 1978.
6) *Sunday Telegraph* (Sydney) 29 Oct 1978.
7) *The Weekend Australian* 28-29 Oct 1978
8) *The Age* (Melbourne) 28 Oct 1978.
9) *The Truth about Flying Saucers* by Aime Michel (Criterion, 1956) p.39.
10) *The Australian* 25 Oct 1978.
11) *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney) 16 Nov 1978.
12) *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney) 27 Oct 1978.
13) Article by Arch Maclean — unidentified newsclipping.
14) *Sunday Echo* (Malaysia) 17 July 1977.
15) *INFO Journal* vol 3, no 4, Feb 1974.
16) *Le Progres* (Lyons, France) 7 Oct 1978. Trans: Phil Ledger.
17) *The Herald* (Sydney) 10 Oct 1978.
18) *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY) 30 July 1978.
19) *Morning News* (Dallas, Texas) 21 Jan 1979.
20) *Fortean Times* (June 1975) 20p14—15.
21) *Morning News* (Dallas, Texas) *21 Jan 1979.*
22) *Paris News* (Texas) 18 May 1977.

Credit: Thomas R Adams, Greg Axford, Rev AH Debnam, Lucius Farish and the UFO Newsclipping Service No 113, Les Herring, Phil Ledger, Ion Will.

Nigel Watson is a leading researcher for UFO Investigator's Network (UFOIN), and a frequent contributor to UFO periodicals.

It's bad enough having the place over-run with Londoners every weekend!

Hardbacks

LIFETIDE *by Lyall Watson (Hodder & Stoughton 1979; $ 5.95hb, pp376, index, bib.)*

I was taken to task for my opinion of Watson's last book, *Gifts of Unknown Things* , because I suggested it was a different kind of book from Watson's well known first two books, in that there was a definite trend in his writing, from the scientifically based biologist of *Supernature* to the mystic of *Gifts* who alternated between wide eyed awe at the wonders of nature and dispair over the banalities of technological man. I said, in a review in an earlier FT, that Watson seemed to be undergoing a personal re-evaluation and that should he successfully integrate the scientist and the mystic his fourth book should be well worth the wait. I am pleased to say it is !

The subtitle – 'a biology of the unconscious' – indicates well in advance that his scientific knowledge is to be placed at the disposal of a creative, speculative and intuitive interpretation of the age-old fundamental dichotomy of mind/body, or the internal and external worlds. Using fascinating examples drawn from recent work in nearly every field of biological and psychological science, Watson has bravely attempted a new synthesis - and I believe he has succeeded ! His exposition gives us exciting insights into man's relationship with the world of external phenomena on the one hand, and the perplexing world of the paranormal on the other, and his clear restatements of problems and phenomena allow the development of fresh approaches.

In essence, Watson takes his primary clues from the way in which paranormal phenomena seem to bridge the internal and external worlds, and his belief that the 'nonsensical' and paradoxical aspects of these strange effects, meaningless to the materialist scientist, does indeed have meaning and relevance. It comes down to the business of learning to see again but in a different light, as the magicians, the shamans, the mystics of all ages have repeatedly said. Biologically, Watson argues, man is a composite creature; his physiology is a subdivided whole representing simultaneously different stages of physiological evolution, each with its own brain or neurological structure, and its own needs, consciousness and conflicts, dreams and memories.

This in turn confirms that there are many layers to the mind, though it might be better to state that not in terms of a hierarchy, but as a dynamic fluctuating gestalt of different but contiguous states of consciousness. Watson's most interesting sections deal with Jan Ehrenwald's notion that pregnancy is the "cradle of ESP", and that the foetus is conscious, although due to his limited sensory inputs, this functioning is on what we might call an archaic level and similar to Jung's hypothesis of the 'collective unconscious'. In this primary state we can postulate the origins of most psychic phenomena (including their puzzling 'childish' qualities) and the mechanisms of reality-shaping. Naturally, this leads Watson to consider the theories of archetypal forces and symbols, and the new hypothesis of alternate-realities (as discussed by Joseph Chilton Pearce *et al*), and of paranormal beings and objects (eg UFOs, apparitions, monsters, etc.) as projections from the unconscious mind that materialised or became apparently real. There is also the suggestion here that such effects, along with psi phenomena, ESP, etc may be part of the normal abilities and repertoire of the human mind before they'disappear' , either eliminated by the process of 'growing-up' (i.e.conforming to the adult concensus of reality in which these phenomena are less real), or that they are swamped by the 'roof-brain chatter' (as Castaneda put it) of everyday consciousness. Jung apparently suspected this since he thought it "probable that we continually dream, but consciousness makes while waking such a noise that we do not hear it." Watson goes on to link the paradoxical state of 'active sleep' (in which dreams are lucid and not linked to the rapid eye-movements of normal dream-sleep) in which foetuses are known to spend most of their time, to the archaic hypnoid states of trance typically associated with paranormal phenomena. Buy the book and read on.

Along the way we get other clues, like the paranormal phenomena associated with children or the emotionally childlike. The book opens and closes with Watson's encounter with the well-publicised case of the Italian girl who could turn tennis-balls inside out mentally, and how she lost the ability, or her interest in the ability, when the onset of adolescence made her more physically aware of herself and others. Also along the way we pause for many fascinating nature lessons, and as a guide Watson is clear and apposite. Recommended for its concise restatement of the problems presented by paranormal phenomena, and indeed of our very existence, and for the valuable detailed bibliography of 600 items. *RJMR.*

THE LEGEND AND BIZARRE CRIMES OF SPRING HEELED JACK *by Peter Haining (Frederick Muller 1977; $4.75 hb,180 pp, illos; index)*

Spring Heeled Jack has been an enigmatic figure in popular British tradi-

tion for nearly 150 years, but if Peter Haining is to be believed, the mystery is now solved. He puts forward a convincing case, which briefly is that the idea of Spring Heeled Jack originated with the Marquis of Waterford, a practical joker who dressed up in a flowing cloak and mask and, with steel claws on his fingers and springs in the heels of his boots, during 1837-8 terrorised London by leaping out at unsuspecting young women, breathing fire into their faces, ripping their clothes off, and then escaping. Any reports later than 1838 can be attributed to other people emulating Spring Heeled Jack,Haining tells us. He makes out a good case; nevertheless some doubt remains. Apart from the danger of lynching if Jack were ever caught (which may indeed merely have added spice to the eccentric behaviour, if it were he), the discriptions given by people who saw Jack are of interest: eyes like balls of fire, the ability to vomit blue and white flame, pointed ears, claws instead of fingers , clothes which included a helmet and oil-skin like garments. The British ghostly black dog, reported over many centuries including our own, very often has glowing red eyes, and sometimes it belches fire. Alien visitors to our 20th century world sometimes have claws, and often have pointed ears. They also are on occasion dressed in helmet and bright,shiny garments.

Haining considers the 'alien visitor' theory in his last chapter, 'Was Jack a man from Outer Space ?', using to present the theory a 1961 article from *Flying Saucer Review* which in the light of what we have learned about UFOs in the intervening 17 years is somewhat naive and does not help the theory. If we forget about ' a man from outer space' and consider Jack instead as yet another denizen of that other world whose location we are yet uncertain of, this possibility is still feasible, despite Haining's conviction that Jack was several terrestrial jokers. For as well as Jack's revealing appearance, some later encounters are not so easily dismissed as Haining makes out, for example, sightings of Jack at Caistor, Lincolnshire in 1877 (including at New Barracks), at Aldershot's North Camp in 1877, and Colchester barracks some time during the 19th century (why the interest in army premises ? Surely the most likely place

MITCH DAVIES

for such an intruder to get shot ?), and the relatively recent, and apparently his last , appearance in Everton, Liverpool, in 1904 when Jack was seen on several occasions, finally putting on a display in broad daylight which included leaping from roof to roof before he mysteriously vanished. The Aldershot appearance is especially intriguing, because two soldiers shot at Jack with rifles, and (I quote Haining) ' the bullet seemed to pass right through the being' and ' their bullets seemed to have not the slightest effect' (both page 90). The uselessness of guns in fending off alien beings has also been reported in encounters with Sasquatches, black dogs, and UFO occupants. Haining does not deal with this aspect (which apparently undermines this 'terrestrial jokers' theory), but presumably if questioned on it would say that the men were too frightened to aim properly. In fact on the first occasion the figure was immediately in front of the soldier who fired, and it would seem to have been difficult for him to miss. Or was Jack wearing bullet-proof garments ? But wouldn't such garments weigh him down ?

Despite the fact that the solution to the mystery is not as clear-cut as Haining would like to think, this is a useful book to have for it is the first to document Jack's career. However, an author with more knowledge of ghostlore, Forteana and ufology would have handled the puzzling aspects of this still enigmatic figure with more understanding than Haining does. The book is illustrated with period engravings, but unfortunately many are rather murky in reproduction.

Janet Bord

A DICTIONARY OF OMENS AND SUPERSTITIONS *compiled by Philippa Waring (Souvenir Press 1978,$4.95 hb, pp264.)*

Dr Johnson felt he must touch every wooden post along a certain road whenever he frequented it. He couldn't explain it, and had no intention of desisting for fear of calamity or bad luck. Contrary to the beliefs of materialists, superstitions have very real functions, and their practicality is ensured long after their purpose has been forgotten or sunk out of view of the narrow conscious mind. For all those who wish to propitiate fate here are countless time-honoured ways. Other entries deal with special requests, prophecy, psychic self-defense, symbols, animal and nature lore, old wives' tales and folk medicine, etc. Surprising how many of the entries deal with modern superstitions (e.g. US airmen crossing the belts in unoccupied seats. Or in the north of England a belief persists that consumption can be cured by swallowing a baby frog!) *RJMR.*

THE FRIAR OF SAN GIOVANNI *by John McCaffery (Darton, Longman & Todd 1978; $3.95 hb, pp143, glossary, photos.)*

Pio Forgione, better known as Padre Pio, died in 1968. He had displayed in his body the wounds of Christ' s crucification for 50 years, the longest of any recorded stigmatic. Loved and adored in his lifetime as a saint, his *cultus* has more than once drawn warnings from the Vatican asking his admirers to desist. The Church has a policy of not canonising a living person, and certainly not on the evidence of miracles alone, tales of which proliferated around this shy monk. The telling criteria of sainthood, in the Church's opinion , are the 'heroic virtues' of piety, humility, obedience and faith - and on these counts one may say of Padre Pio that his canonisation is only a matter of time.

There are many accounts of his life, stigmatization and alleged miracles, but most are written for the faithful (or credulous, according to your point of view), and lack the very details that interest researchers and Forteans. Some are simply hard to obtain. A very few

contain good accounts of the medical examination of Pio's stigmata and their periodic bleedings. In fact of their existence and the pain they caused him continuously there can be no doubt. Over the years millions attended his masses and confessed to him, and one of the most consistent of the 'miracles' claimed for him was his power to (telephatically ?) see into the hearts of men. But he was also said to have healed the sick, been in two places at once, walked in the rain without getting wet, and appeared in visions to people.

I had high hopes for this book - but it turns out to be a collection of personal reminiscences of the 'living saint', both first and second hand, of the author who lives as a journalist and a businessman in Italy. McCaffery admits that he writes from memory and that some circumstantial details may not be completely accurate, but this will not bother the faithful as they plough through the many short chapters recounting healing miracles, clairvoyance, and the wit and wisdom generally of Padre Pio. But I was hoping to learn more about the stigmatization, about the background and make-up of the saint-elect, his early illnesses and strange experiences. Instead this is a different book, one which concentrates on the last years of this simple and good-humoured holy man, and the lives of those in close contact with him, and indeed the lives he touched by his existence. *RJMR.*

VOICES FROM THE GODS *by David Christie-Murray (Routledge & Kegan Paul 1978; $6.95 hb, pp280, index,bib, notes, plates.)*

'Speaking in tongues' is an ancient phenomenon, and although the main thrust of this book is in the role 'glossolalia' has played in the Christian West, Christie-Murray is obviously aware of its universality,e.g. in shamanism or spiritualism, and before beginning a chronologically structured analysis of the various Pentecostal and 'heretical' movements that have kept the practice alive and shouting, devotes chapter 1 to a brief survey of 'possession' among other cultures. The Christians, of course, distinguish possession by spirits from possession by the Holy Spirit; for them the utterances spoken in the latter state are the virtual outpourings of divine communication. Christie-Murray divides the subject into two: glossolalia (paranormal speaking in tongues) and xenolalia (paranormal speaking of foreign languages allegedly unknown to the speaker in normal state), and after the historical survey discusses the psychological and anthropological aspects of tongue-speaking. The number of Christian sects which were founded upon glossolalia are more than one would at first think, ranging from groups within the Russian Orthodox Church, to the Camisards of the 17th C, to Mormons and Quakers and Shakers. It is strongly linked to religious revivals and was prominent in the great Welsh revival of 1905, during which Fort noted the appearances of UFOs, mystery animals, spontaneous combustions and other phenomena. Then begining with the first Pentecost feast after the Crucifixion (Whitsun), and the 'revivalist' meeting of the early Christians as they spread through Asia Minor, our author charts the 'family tree' of glossolalia through the charismatic sects to their many descendants today, and which show the 'love-bombing' techniques of disarming and converting newcomers practised (or malpractised) by the Children of God and other modern sects is nothing new at all. The early Church used the techniques of tongue-speaking meetings to establish their mission and unity. The Apostle Paul frequently spoke in tongues as both prayer and worship, but later seemed aware that the chaos and 'babel' of these meetings could mislead outsiders into blurring the two kinds of possession. Eventually, Church worship settled down to more ritual forms since the great majority cannot readily or practically reach such heights of inspiration – and thus gradually glossolalia was pushed to the fringes of Church practice, until it was particularly associated with heretical and fanatical sects.

In truth, as Christie-Murray discusses in the later parts of the books, both glossolalia and xenolalia become more complicated the more you look into them. With the rise of the Spiritualist movement there emerged many authentic examples of both phenomena; but shorn of their Christian context, the strange languages were here said to belong to the non-human world of spirits, or even to one's own past lives in other times and places. At the same time, the foundations of psychology were being laid and in systematising mental phenomena the pioneer psychologists recognised two groups of relevant phenomena. First, the psychopathologies of mental illness in which a consistent symptom is the hearing of loud and often abusive voices,whether *internally (e.g. 'Someone is putting* voices into my head.') or as external projections (e.g. hearing accusive voices from radios, or superimposed on the voices of other people.) The second group involved the paradoxical phenomena of Mesmerism, hypnotism, somnambulism etc and the way in which they occurred or could be induced in quite ordinary healthy people, helped establish the hypotheses of the subconscious and unconscious. Now, from the burgeoning of psychic research we have to add another possibility...ESP or psi, and the new 'electronic voices' on tapes etc.

It is quite impossible to do justice to the thought and scope of this book here. Christie-Murray, himself a Friend, admits that despite the mass of evidence, no one theory seems to be capable of definitive proof. The phenomenon exists, and in a wide variety of forms, each with its supportive theory. He agrees that more experiment is needed... or more faith. Recommended. *RJMR.*

MIRACLE *by Des Hickey & Gus Smith (Hodder & Stoughton 1978; $4.50 hb, pp172, brief bib.)*

You may remember the splash in the papers in 1976, when among others, Pope Paul canonised a Scottish martyr, Blessed John Ogilvie, and it came to light that one of the main and convincing pieces of evidence considered by the Consistory of Cardinals was the miraculous cure of docker John Fagan, of Glasgow. In 1965 he had a major resection of the stomach and colon after the discovery of a massive carcinoma. The recovery was temporary, and by 1969 the mass had grown again, and he was sent home to die. He was given the Last Rites by a local priest who gave him a medal of Blessed John Ogilvie, and advised the family to pray to the martyr for his intercession. A few days later medical examinations confirmed the disappearance of the abdominal mass and Fagan's steady recovery.

The authors reconstruct Fagan's case from the records and testimony of those involved, and against this background give an account of the life and martyrdom of John Ogilvie (d. 1615), and

stages of transforming his beatification into a full canonisation. *RJMR.*

INTO THIN AIR: People who Disappear. *by Paul Begg (David & Charles 1979; $5.95 hb, pp184, index, notes, plates.)*

To satisfy the public's, or the publisher's, demand for a constant stream of 'true mystery' stories, too many writers have been content to copy out stories from earlier books and articles without any attempt to check their authenticity. The 'Forteana Corrigenda' column in FT has begun the daunting task of investigating some of the old chestnuts that appear from time to time in monster, mystery and UFO books, and which often disappear into thin air when closely examined. Paul Begg carries on the work, and in this work the thin air consumes more legends than people. Among the distortions, inaccuracies and downright lies which he exposes are the myths of David Lang (from material in FT18) [see also Janet Bord's letter in this issue –Ed], and the alleged kidnapping of the Norfolk Regiment by UFOs [see Paul Begg's article in FT27 –Ed], and the *Mary Celeste* mystery. Also demystified is much of the data used by lazy, gullible or unscrupulous writers to support theories about the 'Devil's Sea' (off Japan) and the 'Bermuda Triangle', scenes of disappearing ship and plane incidents whose actual circumstances are generally far less strange than their legends.

Paul Begg has sought out the original sources of 'disappearing people' stories, and his book is useful, sensible and clearly written. The only pity is that he does not follow up on Fortean ideas on disappearances. There is no mention of UFO -- or fairy-linked abductions, nor does he refer to the testimonies of people who have vanished in strange circumstances and returned with even stranger stories. It is odd that a writer on this subject, who apparently knows his Fort, has nothing to say on teleportation, or on people who have mysteriously appeared somewhere after presumably vanishing from somewhere else. Verdict: a good book as far as it goes -- shame it does not go further. *John Michell*

PATHWAYS TO THE GODS *by Tony Morrision (Michael Russell 1978; $5.95 hb, pp208, index, bib, plates).*

Morrison produced a documentary for BBC TV on the enigmas of South American civilizations (shown in November 1977), which dwelt in part on the work of Maria Reiche in mapping and exploring the famous ground lines and figures on the arid stoney plains of Nasca in Peru, and of Dr Gerald S Hawkins in surveying and analysing the data on the lines for significant patterns and signs of astronomical alignment. In the course of the filming Morrison explored further afield and stumbled upon the discovery of a straight line mystery directly analogous to the European ley-line enigma. In a recent *Ley Hunter* (TLH84) editor Paul Devereux and John Michell discussing this book claimed they could find no real distinction between the newly discovered alignments in the Andes and the examples of Leys rediscovered in England and Wales by Alfred Watkins. Primarily both linked hills, villages and shrines, both were deliberately straight, and both seemed to have

UNDERCURRENTS

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Commune sense and sensibility

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Self-sufficiency as she is lived

The Co-op Lesson: Learning the Hard Way—Iago Mephistopheles
An interview with a would-be socialist entrepreneur

Hanging Separately—Jenny Thornley
Two co-ops that failed

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An alternative to the Vienna UNCSTD conference

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been used as paths.

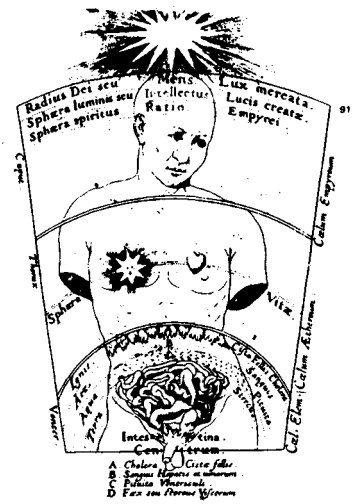
Morrison sets the background by outlining the work of Reiche and including Dr Hawkins' Nasca study; then follows a very readable and well-illustrated account of the 'pathways in the Andes' (or *ceques*), and other mysterious ruins, like forts and reservoirs. The accuracy of these lines over great distances argues for a purpose to their construction, but Morrison admits that "Why?" has to be left unanswered for now. Fascinating problem well explored, and essential reading for all interested in ancestral mysteries.*RJMR.*

Paperbacks

ROBERT FLUDD by Joscelyn Godwin (Thames & Hudson 1979; £2.95 pb, pp96,bib. engs.)

Forteans today, no less than the orthodox scientists, are to some extent bound to the 'Dominant' as Fort called it, the pervading paradigm that the Universe has to be separated into mind and matter, subjective and objective (etc.) before sense can be made of it. Forteans have felt this as a drive to make their work more 'scientific' -- but the comparison ends there. Forteans can be distinguished from mere scientists by their subscription to an inclusive cosmology, a sense of Continuity (again as Fort put it), against the divide and subdivide *reduction* of science. This Continuity is partly a rationalisation of the mystical and logical sense of unity of all things that all things interpenetrate and influence each other to a greater or lesser degree. In our strivings we Forteans would do well to look to the past, for there are men, like Robert Fludd, who in seeking to understand the sheer variety of phenomena, tried to develop systems which integrated God and Man and the world of phenomenal appearances.

Fludd was born in Shropshire, and studied and taught at Oxford before travelling around Europe's centers of learning in the 17th century. He was truly a Renaissance man (though a little late); a philosopher, musician, doctor, astrologer etc. True, he laboured under the 'Old Dominant' (Descartes had not yet arrived on the scene to tip the Church off its pedestal, replacing it with material science) which probably influenced him to study the Cabala and other systems of occult



knowledge -- but he knew archbishops and scientists (Harvey, Keppler,Inigo Jones etc.) and he was proud his writings were acceptable to Calvinists, Anglicans and Catholics alike. The main influences in his philosophy seem to be Paracelsus, Pythagoras and the early Rosicrucians. He conceived of a major 3 volume encyclopedia of knowledge, and completed most of the sections. This book is an introduction to those works, profusely illustrated with engravings from the originals, and which attempts to show that there is much in common between Fludd and the philosophical synthesis (between occult science and natural science) going on today. The book can be read with great profit by Forteans, and the illustrations, showing Fludd's accomplishment as an anatomist, astronomer, mathematician, engineer, natural historian, theologian, cosmologist and systematiser are full of the most evocative symbols. Miss Godwin is to be congratulated , and her book (in T&H's 'Art and Imagination' series) is to be recommended. *RJMR..*

EVOLUTION *by Colin Patterson (RKP & British Museum [Natural History] 1978; £5.95 hb, £2.95 pb, pp 197, index, bib, diags, drgs, photos, glossary.)*

A brilliantly informative and concise book that manages to summarise the official dogma of Darwinian evolution, and by treating it historically Patterson includes the challenges to Darwinism from recent developments in genetic science, tissue-typing etc, and the emergence of 'neo-Darwinism'. In full awareness of Prof Popper's criticism that Darwinian evolution is not a scientific theory but a "metaphysical research programme" (by which he means the theory is more akin to a metaphysical proposition than a scientific one, but accepting it allows the development of a research programme) Patterson discusses the basic notions including species, heredity, genetics, mutations, natural selection theory, origin of species theory, the origin of life, evolution and man; and an interesting section on classification and typology which shows the radically different effects of different typing methods used between say a geneticist and an anthropologist, and even between biologists of Darwin's day and today, very much proving the inescapable influence of your particular point of view. Apart from the book's obvious value as both a reference and a primer for all interested in evolution theory, Forteans could also find some interest and advantage in the chapter which discusses theories of science, and tests neo-Darwinism according to their criteria. Lamarck's notion of 'acquired characteristics' is discussed sympathetically, but it has to be admitted that it has not opened itself to the wealth of evidence, discovery and experiment that Darwinism has, and although it survived to become a political tool in Russia under Lysenko, the essential confirmations are still lacking. True Forteans can find many instances which defy Darwinistic theories of natural selection etc, but these too still lack their systematising model. It is well argued here that neo-Darwinism, with its faults, "is still the best we have". The whole tone of the book is genial, informed and clear, a nice touch being to end with a photo gallery of leading figures in the debate for and against. Recommended. *RJMR*

THE OTHER ATLANTIS *by Robert Scrutton (Sphere 1979; £1.25 pb, pp 251, glossary, plates.)*

In 1871 a Frisian antiquarian told the world of a manuscript that had been in his family for generations, since 804AD in fact. The writing was in an ancient Frisian dialect and told of Atland, a culture and land mass around the north and east of the British Isles, which was contemporary with the more famous Atlantis, and which some believe was the model of the Hyperborean tradition. It survived the Atlantean

cataciysm by thousands of years to perish itself in a Velikovsky-type catastrophe – an asteroid collision forming the north polar crater and tilting the spin axis to the present, is suggested here – in 2193 BC. The legacy of Atland was astonishing. It is here suggested that Frisian heroes and kings (etc) were the real life models of the Norse Odin, the Cretan Minos, the Roman Neptune, Minerva, and Temple of Vesta; that English Common Law was founded on Atland's law, and that our numerals are not based on the Arabic but Ancient Frisian, and that the Greeks derived their writing from Frisia, via Phoenicia; that Ulysses is mentioned by name as trying to wrest a 'magic lamp' from a Frisian priestess Kalip (Calypso); that the Indian epic, the *Mahabharata* was written by Frisian colonists who settles in the Punjab; that Britain was Atland's 'Botany Bay' etc.

If this is true then this book will have a far-reaching effect on nearly every aspect of official and occult western history. Why haven't we heard of it before? Well, it is said to be a typical tale of human disbelief, apathy, stupidity and fear. Shortly after its translation, it seems, articles in London newspapers attracted it considerable attention, but so sensational were its contents and implications in academic circles that the establishment historians assured the world it was a hoax. Their word in those days was law, the furore died down, and the manuscript, called the *Oera Linda Book*, fell again into obscurity. Robert Scrutton here re-discovers and re-interprets the *Oera Linda Book* – apparently based on the long out-of-print English translation by William R Sandbach, of 1876 – and presents whole extracts followed by his commentary relating the text to "modern scientific knowledge, archaeology and traditional mythology and occult doctrine".

On many levels the book deserves to be widely read and discussed and this edition should facilitate that. Recently Neville Spearman published the sequel to this book (*Secrets of Lost Atland* in hardback, reviewed in FT28) which deals with the mystical and material sciences of the Atland legacy, and we understand this too will be eventually released as a Sphere paperback. I understand some scholarly and detailed refutations exist, but in German and unavailable to us. The Velikovskyans have serious reservations about the *Oera Linda Book*. Read with caution. *RJMR.*

THE MEDIUMSHIP OF THE TAPERECORDER *by DJ Ellis (Published by the author from: Fernwood Nightingales, Welt Chiltington, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 2QT, 1978; £1.50/$5.00 pb, index, bib, glassary, diags, tabls.)*

David Ellis was the Perrot-Warrick Student of Trinity College, Cambridge, for 1970-72, and the terms of his brief involved study of 'voice extras' on tape recordings as possible evidence for the continuance of human existence after bodily death. These voices are heard on the playbacks of tapes recorded by a variety of methods from open microphone monitoring room noise or running water to microphones linked to radios tuned to random or white noise frequencies, or by replacing the microphones with a diode. Apart from a degree of press interest in the EVP (electronic voice phenomenon) in 1971, following the English publication of *Breakthrough*, Dr Konstantin Raudive's account of his experiments based on the pioneer work of Friedrich

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UFO Congress In association with Grand Metropolitan Hotels, BUFORA is arranging the First London International UFO Research Congress, at the Mount Royal Hotel, Marble Arch, W1 on 26 and 27 August 1979. Probable guest speakers: Dr Allen Hynek(USA), Dr Leo Sprinkle(USA), Edoardo Russo (Italy), Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos (Spain), and leading UK ufologists. Write for details and application forms to:

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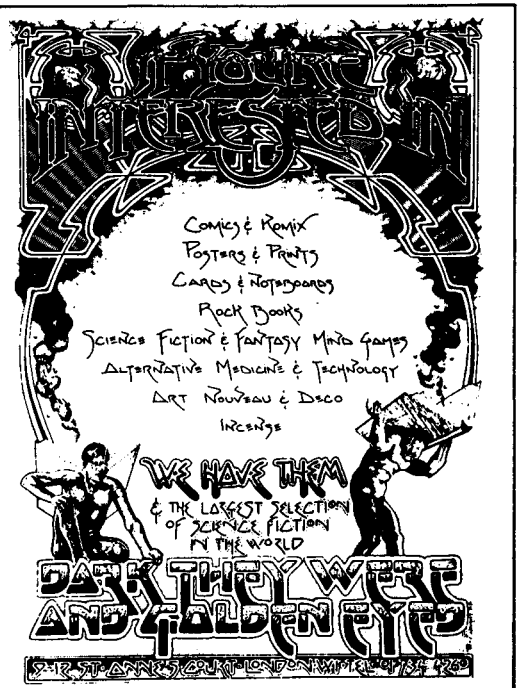
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Jürgenson, interest in and experimentation on the EVP was left to a small band of researchers (see *EVP News* in our journal reviews). In this case, though, Ellis was able to make use of the Perrott-Warrick award for original psychic research to conduct a long term study of the EVP. The book is a collation of his progress reports over the period, and although his ultimate conclusion is negative as far as the EVP is concerned – "it does not seem to be anything paranormal" – Ellis does admit that it may be triggering the psychic abilities of the experimenter, and investigations on different briefs may be more rewarding. The book constitutes an important record of experiments (usually unsuccessful), interviews, conferences, book critiques, discussions and analyses of recordings. *RJMR.*

Journals

FT will have a policy of helping the research field as far as we can, not forgetting that we too were a small magazine once and grateful for any mention we could get. In the new FT we will continue to list other magazines on an exchange basis. The only general rules for inclusion here, are 1) that your magazine must have some relevance to our studies, and 2) you establish an exchange with us. Each issue we list the mags we have received on exchange since the previous issue, and give their basic details. No mag, no mention – Ed.

PURSUIT 11:4 (Fall 1978) – report on a conference on Sasquatch and similar humanoid monsters; antiquarian records of climatic changes in Greenland by George Eberhart; Larry Arnold with more on phantom ships and strange fires; our editor's account of the Shiels Nessie photos; Ron Anjard on the colonization of the Americas in 2000 BC; Britton Wilkie on Bronze Age enigmas, and more. *Pursuit* is the quarterly journal of the SITU, the Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained. $10.00/yr (Overseas $12.50). Apply to:SITU Membership Services, RFD 5, Gales Ferry, CT 06335, USA.

INFO JOURNAL 31 (Sept-Oct 1978)– the physical characteristics of Bigfoot; interviews with Big Bird witnesses (complete with incoherent,uh, interjections); plus fewer notes of clippings than usual. *INFO JOURNAL* is the organ of the International Foretean Organization. £10.00/yr. Write for details: INFO. 7317 Baltimore Ave., College Park, MD 20740, USA.

SIS REVIEW 3:3 (Winter 1978/9)– 'A chronology for the Middle Kingdom and Israel's Egyptian bondage' by Dr JJ Bimson; Dr Velikovsky identifying the Biblical 'Kima and Kesil' as the planets Saturn and Mars, respectively; Dr I Wolf on Shakespeare's use of myths and omens in *Hamlet*, its parallels with the legend of Orestes and some legends in the *Popol Vuh* of the Quiche Mayas, and that these parallels may indicate an archetypal drama of a celestial catastrophe; plus letters & notes. *SIS REVIEW* is the journal of the Society for Interdisciplinary Studies which explores the work of Velikovsky and catastrophic geology. For details, write: RM Amelan, Secretary SIS, 6 Jersey House, Cotton Lane, Manchester 20.

JOURNAL OF METEOROLOGY 4:35 (Jan 1979) – remarkable mirages at Hastings and the Humber estuary; a tornado at Hitchin; unusual cloud; Shetland's greatest storm; positively charged lightning; and 'World-wide weather disasters' lists for October and November 1978. Plus weather summaries and other articles. 4:36 (February 1979) –some hard European winters; floods, blizzards and tornadoes; the Thames 'frost fair' 1814; a mini ice-age? origin of giant ice-meteors; 'World-wide weather disasters' for December 1978; other weather summaries and articles. Indispensible to the Fortean interested in weather anomalies and records. Monthly. £9.50/yr (Overseas $22.00 surface, $28.00 airmail). *JOURNAL OF METEOROLOGY*, Cockhill House, Trowbridge Wilts BA14 9BG.

NESSLETTER 31 (Dec 1978) – summary of the JARIC examination of Nessie on 22 Aug 1977, plus statements from some of the witnesses; plus notes on the Potomac and Canadian monsters. *NESSLETTER* is published by the Ness Information Service as a clearinghouse for monster sightings and related information. Monthly: £1.75/$7.00/yr. Editor, Rip Hepple; Huntshieldford, St Johns Chapel, Bishop Aukland, Co Durham.

EVP NEWS 12 (Feb 1979) – German interview with Jürgenson; news and letters on EVP; article by professor Hans Bender. A newsletter for researchers and all interested in the 'electronic voice phenomenon' (EVP). Editor Alan Cleaver has written us an introduction to the weird voices that appear on tapes for a forthcoming issue of FT. *EVP NEWS* is monthly: £1.50/yr (Overseas airmail £4.50/yr), from Alan Cleaver, 12 Lime Tree Ave., Old Bilton, Rugby, Warks CV22 7QT.

VESTIGIA NEWSLETTER 2:4 (Winter 1978) – articles on 'Plasmas' and the nature of mystery lights ('spook lights'), and notes on related subjects. Vestigia is an active Fortean fieldgroup in New Jersey, who are investigating local reports of Bigfoot, UFOs, mystery lights, and lake monsters. Write for details. Vestigia, RD 2 Brookwood Rd, Stanhope, NJ 07874,USA.

RES BUREAUX BULLETIN - regular summary of Fortean clippings and related matters from Canada. Available for exchange, clippings or other support. Edited by Mr X., Box 1598, Kingston, Ontario K7L5C8, Canada. Mr X (legal name) also edits the periodical **CHAOS** dealing specifically with Fort, his writings and notes, his cases, and his sources of materials, with the purpose of keeping in circulation this valuable and hard-to-obtain material. This project is threatened through lack of support. Send C$2.00/US$2.00/£1.00 for single copies. Third issue just out – to be reviewed next issue.

FORGOTTEN AGES 12 (Winter 1979) – mainly two articles: the search for Atlantis pt 3, and the 'Clones of Enki', not a SF novel but a Sumerian inscription apparently describing the production of biological duplicates by the manipulation and artificial impregnation of genetic material into host mothers. *FORGOTTEN AGES* is published monthly by J R Jochmans, being informed and expansive comment on the various alternatives to orthodox history. $3.00/yr. JR Jochmans, Box 82863,Lincoln, NB 68501, USA.

NEUROLOG 4 – special *What is reality?* issue – produced by The Network in association with the 'Corps of Reality Engineers', with articles on Fortean phenomena and societies; alternate geography; magick, healing, animal mutilations; MIB comics; paranoia; health and diet; UFO; and several on

'reality'. A real bonus is that each copy contains a piece of 'The Fabric of the Universe' This splendid effort forms a good introduction to Fortean and alternate reality topics, and we recommend it to everybody as a good place to start; and there is a large and useful annotated bibliography thrown in. Available from The Network, Box 317, Berkley, CA 94701, USA.

THE LEY HUNTER 84 -- John Michell and Paul Devereux on Morrison's book on the straight lines of Peru; R Rickard on 'The Straight and Crooked'; Tony Roberts on giants; Sid Birchby on the 'Hummadruz'; Dr Derek Banks proposing an 'Experiment on Reality'; Hopi traditions and the vibrating plateau of Colorado; and the other features on ancient stones and alignments; letters and reviews. Now that it is typeset throughout TLH looks and reads a fine magazine. THE magazine of 'earth mysteries' published bimonthly: £3.00/yr (£3.60 Europe; Overseas airmail $9.00). TLH, Box 152, London N10 1EP.

AWARENESS 7:4 (Winter 1978) -- Jim Lorenzen with 'New Light on the Thomas Mantel case'; Martin Straw on possible connections between 'Seers, saints and sunspots'; and Vera Perry on North American Airforce radar sightings of UFOs (or are the UFOs looking at the radar?); news, notes, letters etc. Published by the Contact(UK). Write to their PRO, P Flatman, 17 Quarhill Close, Over Norton, Oxfordshire.

MUFOB 13 -- articles: on close encounters that begin with 'Strange Awakenings' and which, argues Keith Basterfield, have parallels with hypnagogic images; Jenny Randles gives more examples of 'sleep' associated UFO phenomena; Peter Rogerson attempts a 'Revisionist History of Ufology'; and editor John Rimmer goes straight for the throat as he cuts to pieces the apalling standards of British press reportage of UFOs; and another instalment of Rogerson's painstaking catalogue of important close encounter cases. *MUFOB* is Britain's leading journal of UFO theory, published quarterly: £1.75/yr (overseas airmail $4.00). MUFOB: 11 Berkeley Road, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4AW.

NORTHERN UFO NEWS -- the monthly newsletter of the Northern UFO Network, detailing investigations and reports of regional sightings. Published 8 times a year; editor Jenny Randles,23 Sunningdale Drive, Irlam,Salford M30 6NJ. The other four times a year it changes name to *NORTHERN UFOLOGY* and attempts more analyses and articles than reports. Jenny Randles seems tireless in her active pursuit of cases to investigate and write up!

BUFORA JOURNAL 8:1 (Jan-Feb 1979) -- notes, news, investigations, sighting lists of recent cases. Published for members by the British UFO Association. Write: BUFORA Membership Secretary, Mrs A Harcourt,'Berways', Stocking Pelham, Buntingford, Herts.

SKYWATCH -- news, notes, some articles, local sightings and investigations, published by the Manchester Aerial Phenomena Investigation. Write to editor David Rees, 92 Hillcrest Rd, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 5SE.

We have quite a few foreign journals on exchange and these will be included next time. Meanwhile all those responding to ads and notices in these pages might mention where they saw the information. It helps us judge the effectiveness of these services --Ed.

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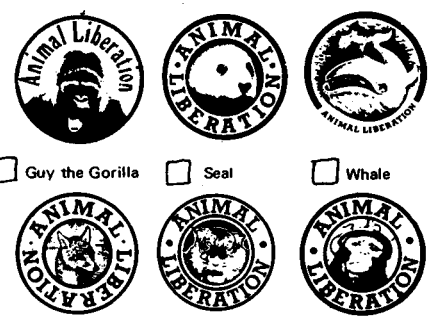

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Letters

THE HUMMADRUZ

In 1975, the late Fortean pioneer Chibbett (see obituary in FT25) lent me some press-cuttings and letters about people who claimed to have heard unexplained humming noises. His attention had been aroused in 1954, and thereafter he noted some dozen cases and wrote to many of the people concerned. In fact, his file showed that there had been *hundreds* of cases. In 1954, the science correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph,* having examined 40 reports, agreed that there was a noise, but could not find a common pattern.

Consider also the writer Edward Hyams, whose wife had been plagued for 5 years by a low-pitched hum on the edge of audibility. A doctor and ear-and nerve-specialists found nothing wrong with her except lack of sleep, and prescribed drugs. The noise still woke her. The GPO took out the phone and slackened the stay-wires on the poles. The hum went on. Hyams campaigned for an official enquiry and received 400 letters. In 1961, a question was raised in Parliament: reply: 'No evidence'.

Harold's file provides the evidence, but even he could not suggest an answer. There the matter might have rested, but by chance I remembered reading about something called The Hummadruz whilst searching old press files some years previously. In 1878 there had been letters in a Manchester paper about a mysterious noise called 'The Hummadruz' (hum+drone+buzz, no doubt) which had brought to light some 14 cases dating back to 1727, and recorded by such people as Goethe, Oliver Wendell Holmes and the naturalist Gilbert White.

Obviously, the noise is more than a Sunday-press gimmick, and one can also see in the light of 3 centuries of records that each generation has tried to explain it in terms of its own technology, despite earlier accounts when such technology did not exist. In 1974 it was radar; in 1879, telephony. About 1828, the whirl of machines in Manchester's factories. In 1769, on the Hampshire Downs, Gilbert White likened the noise to the humming of bees, although none were seen.

Cases have continued to be reported since 1975, with equally-suspect explanations. It is said, for example, that the hearers may be sensitive to a continuous signal allegedly put out by the Ministery of Defence, perhaps as a hot-line to Polaris submarines, and as "evidence" a certain make of commercial pipe-locator is said to make canny use of it. All one can really say is that the Hummadruz has been reported for centuries, whatever it may be.

We need more data, and I have recently started an informal Working Party for this purpose. Already, the results are encouraging, and anyone else who would like to take part is invited to write to me, *enclosing return postage.* Reports from those who have heard the noise are especially welcome, but much useful work could be done by searching records. May I say that the purpose of a working party is to *work,* and that its members must be ready to do so. Requests for information from casual enquirers are not wanted.

SL Birchby
40 Parrs Wood Ave, Didsbury, Manchester M20 OND

PEOPLE'S TEMPLE MASSACRE: VOUDOO MOON RISING?

Jonestown aka 'Village of the Dead' was headed up by a bi-sexual cross-roads christian (bible seasoned by a somewhat older religion which also venerates the "sign of the cross") and son of a masonic ku klux klansman. In black street parlance "jones" means an obsession or addiction as in "Jim Jones had a 'jones' for demerol" (a synthetic opiate).

Jim Jones and aides laid out the bodies of some of the victims/martyrs in a HALF MOON shape. Shortly afterward, Harvey Milk, a homosexual official in San Francisco, was gunned down along with the city's mayor. (Source for half-moon reference: *NY Times* 12 Dec 78).

San Francisco or "Frisco" was plagued throughout the summer and autumn of 1978 by the murders of gay people some of whom were discovered in the HALF MOON Bay area (source: *The Advocate,* 29 Nov 78 pp.7-8) including murder victim and gay Arthur Tomlin Goodman III.

Jim Jones had his headquarters in Frisco. In the slang of the first part of this century "Frisco" was a term used

GREAT MOMENTS IN SCIENCE

'I was present one day [11 March 1878] at a meeting of the Academy of Sciences. It was a day to be remembered, for its proceedings were absurd. Du Moncel introduced Edison's phonograph to the learned assembly. When the presentation had been made, the proper person began quietly to recite the formula as he registered it upon his roll. Then a middle aged academician, whose mind was stored – nay saturated – with traditions drawn from his culture in the classics, rose, and, nobly indignant at the audacity of the inventor, rushed towards the man who represented Edison, and seized him by the collar, crying: "Wretch! we are not to be made dupes of by a ventriloquist!".'

Camille Flammarion *The Unknown* (Harper, 1902, p3).

Other absurd moments spring to mind - but why should we have all the fun? Readers are invited to submit their own favourite candidates to be illustrated in this spot by Hunt Emerson.

to describe fellatio. Mammy Pleasant, the voudoo madame whose bordellos doubled as voudoo temples had her final temple – Beltane – at a ranch in the VALLEY OF THE MOON area of California. Her other temples had all been in "Frisco".

Endnotes: MARTIN is a voudoo patron saint on a par with John. *MARTIN* is a new movie by Geo. *(NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD)* Romero about a vampire who uses only hypodermic needles and razors for extracting blood. Jim Jones, according to the *NY Times* for 12 Dec 78, murdered at least 70 people by injection with a cyanide laden hypodermic syringe(s). In a recent issue of *Occult Review* Colin Camber states that death by vampire bite has the same symptoms as death at the hands of an Obeah (voudoo) Man. When Geo. Romero revised the vampire bite in modern terms, was his muse picking up some *une sorte de musique de fond* from Jim Jones' modern version of Obeah Power?

The Hazards of Opinion: Observe caution when driving thru paranoia about blacks who do magic. American jazz, Jamaican Rastafarians, Jimi Hendrix, marijuana, are all part of a potent transformative wave which has its macabre aspects, just as the European Gothic era had its danse *macabres.* The figure of Christ is as heavy with sorcery symbolism as any of the native earth sorceries of which Voudoo is a part. If Druidic ritual sacrifice is right why is Voudoo wrong? Of course with plutonium around things will get nasty.

PS: Masonic Lodges Stateside are often named NITRAM or MARTIN backwards. Jones had his People's Temple in the Albert Pike Memorial Bldg in good ol' Frisco in 1971.

Michael Hoffman
Geneva, NY.

DAVID LANG REVIVED?

An item in FT18 (pp.6-7) told how research has shown that David Lang never existed, and the story that he vanished in 1880 in Gallatin, Tennessee, in full view of his wife and children was a purely fictional entry in a lying contest. Jay Robert Nash tells this same story in *Among the Missing* (Simon and Schuster, 1978, pp.327-30), but there the unfortunate 'disappearee' is one Orion Williamson, the place Selma, Alabama, and the date July 1854. At the end, Nash comments as follows:

'This story is now famous, not only for the weird "facts" that it relates, but because it has been altered from its very real site. Over the years, a thorough investigation on the part of the author and his staff revealed, Williamson's name and place of residence have been changed for various reasons by several writers. This began when a wandering salesman named McHatten from

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Cincinnati was trapped by a snowstorm in 1889 in Gallatin, Tennessee. With nothing to do except drink, McHatten sat in the Sindle House Hotel and rewrote the Williamson story in an attempt to make a bit of extra change by selling it as an original report. He changed Orion Williamson's name to David Lang, the site of his disappearance from Selma, Alabama, to Gallatin, Tennessee, and the date of the occurence from July 1854 to September 1880. McHatten's story, except for the basic facts of Williamson's disappearance, was a gross fabrication that has been almost universally accepted and rewritten and published in a score of reputable journals and books, not the least of which is the recent *People's Almanac*. No such person as David Lang ever existed in Gallatin, nor did any family named Lang during this period. Orion Williamson was no figment of the imagination but a real, live resident of Selma, Alabama – until, of course, he slipped into eternal mystery.'

Janet Bord
Montgomery, Powys.

Fortean Times

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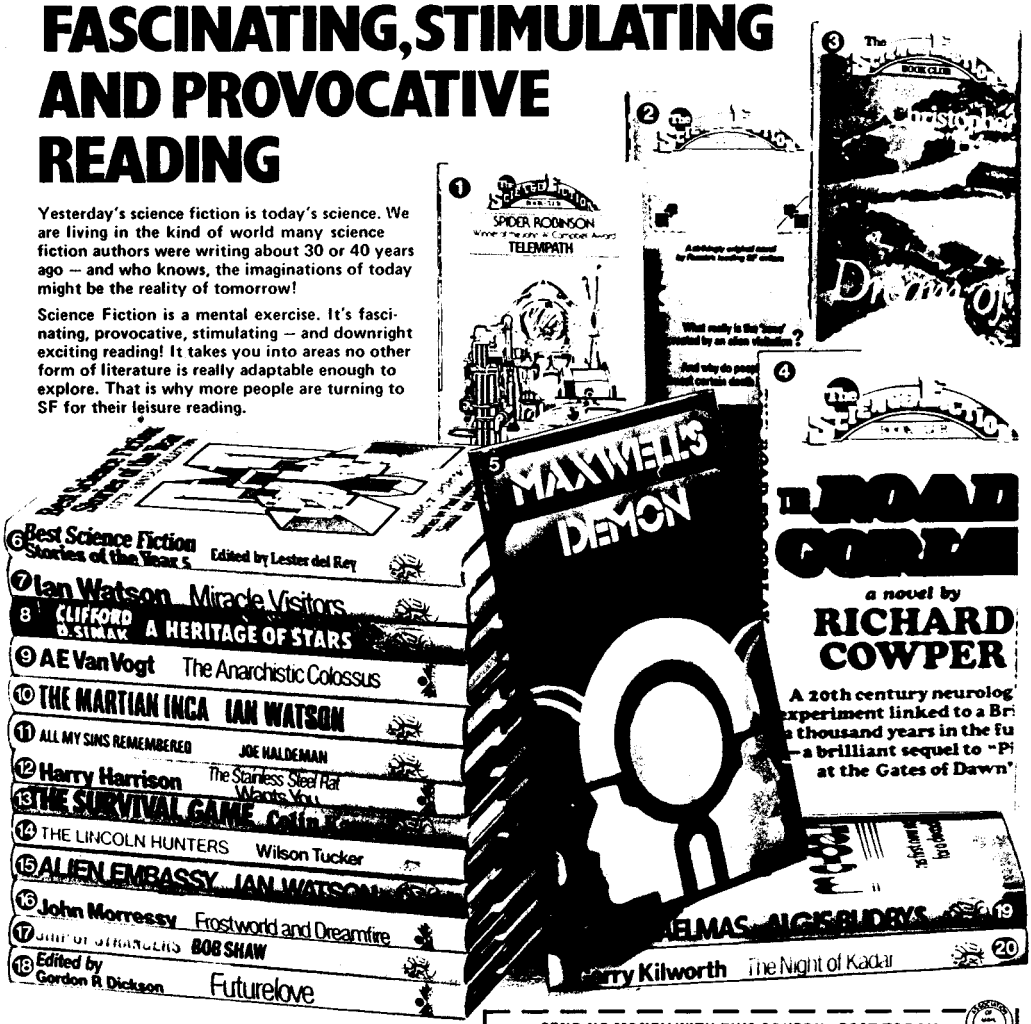
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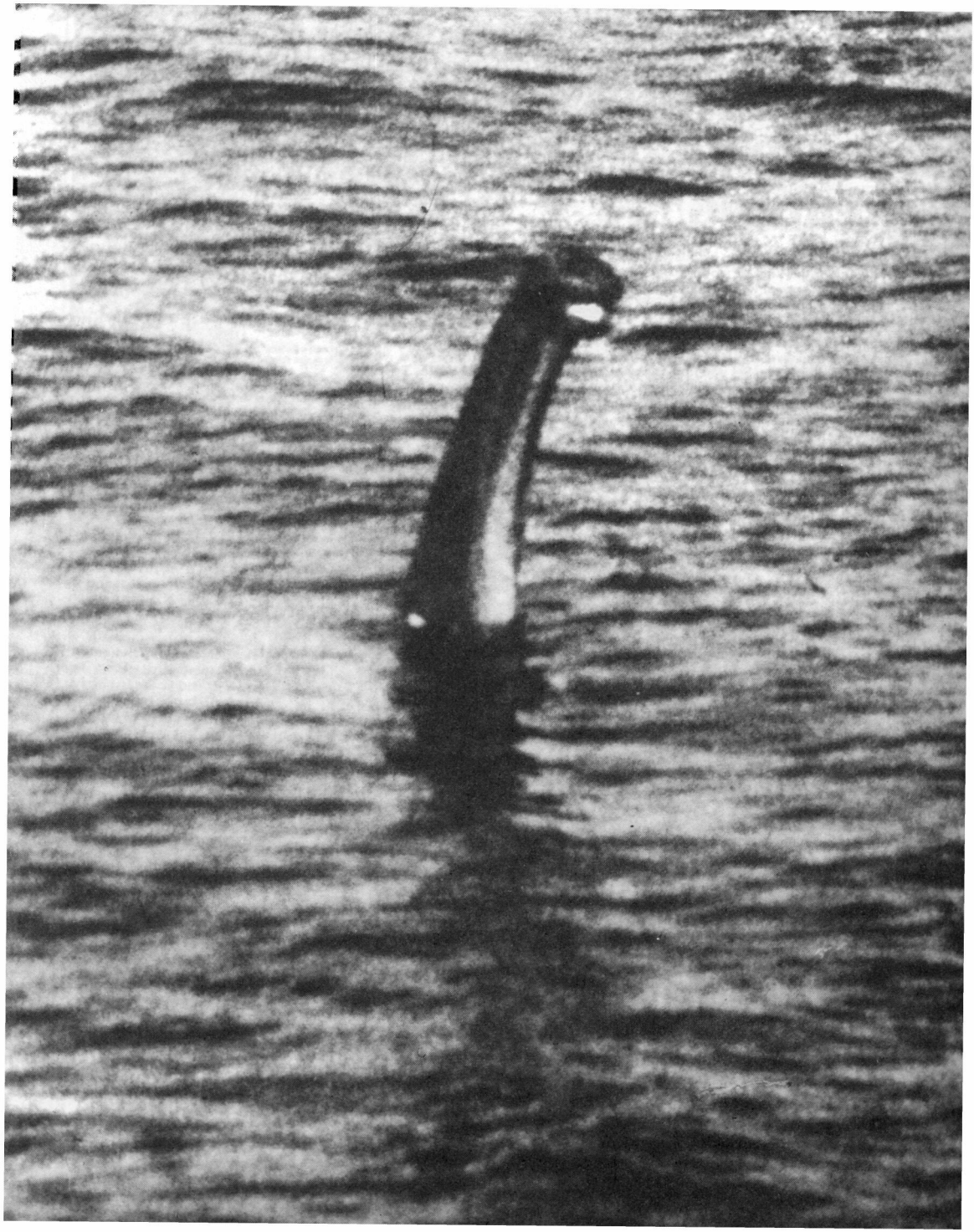

Loch Ness Monster snapped unawares by Doc Shiels, May 1977. *See p26.*

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